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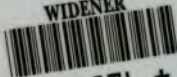
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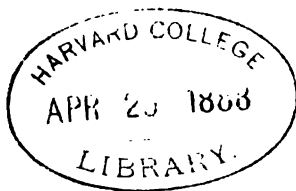
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No.

JOHN HARVEY TREAT.

Mar. 7. 1883

4 vols \$2.00

J. H. Treat
Lawrence.
1862

THE
CLIFTON TRACTS,

BY THE
BROTHERHOOD OF ST. VINCENT OF PAUL.

**PUBLISHED UNDER THE SANCTION OF THE
BISHOP OF CLIFTON, CARDINAL WISEMAN,**

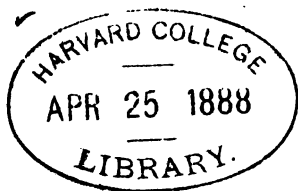
**AND REPUBLISHED WITH THE APPROBATION OF
THE MOST REV. JOHN HUGHES, D. D.,
ARCHBISHOP OF NEW-YORK.**

VOLUME III.

COMPLETE IN ITSELF.

no
**NEW-YORK:
EDWARD DUNIGAN AND BROTHER,
151 FULTON STREET, NEAR BROADWAY.
1855.**

~~III 4756~~
C4228.54.35



John Harvey Treat.

CONTENTS OF VOLUME III.

No.	PAGES.
21. The Intention of the Minister necessary for the valid administration of the Sacraments	30
22. Corpus Christi, or the Feast of the Most Holy Sacrament	28
23. How did England become Catholic? and how did England become Protestant?	40
24. The Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary	30
25. The Litany of the Blessed Virgin, commonly called the Litany of Loretto	34
26. The Rosary of the Blessed Virgin, or the Use of Beads no vain Repetition.....	30
27. Know Popery; or are all these Conversions nothing to me?.....	30
28. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass—Sacrifice the highest act of Worship.....	30
29. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass—The Sacrifice of the Altar one and the same with the Sacrifice of the Cross	30
30. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass—Scripture Proofs of the Doctrine	30

THE

INTENTION OF THE MINISTER

NECESSARY

FOR THE VALID ADMINISTRATION

OF THE SACRAMENTS.



NEW YORK:

EDWARD DUNIGAN AND BROTHER,

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THE INTENTION OF THE MINISTER NECESSARY, ETC.

IN the Catholic Church for the performing of a true Sacrament three things are necessary : 1, that the right *matter* be used ; 2, that the right *form* of words be spoken ; and 3, that the minister *intend* to do what the Church does. Thus, for the Sacrament of Baptism water, and no other liquid, must be applied ; while, at the same time, the following form of words is uttered : "I baptize thee in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ;" and besides this, the person who ministers must intend to do that religious act which the Church calls Baptism, otherwise it is not a Sacrament, but a mere washing with water.

Now Protestants think this requirement of the Church both foolish and wicked. Of course, as in all other things so in this, they put their

own construction on the Church's doctrine, and even pretend to know what it means better than the Church herself does. Indeed, so fully are they possessed with their own notions, that they seem positively incapable of understanding any explanation that is offered them. The reason of this will appear more plainly as I proceed; at present I will only observe that it seems mainly to arise from Protestants not being in the habit of regarding spiritual things as realities; for absurd as they think the Catholic doctrine to be, and incapable as they seem of taking in the simplest idea of it, they do themselves admit and maintain the necessity of intention in matters which *are* realities to them, that is to say, such as have to do with the affairs and interests of this life.

Take marriage, for instance. Everybody will allow that the persons who go through the ceremony must really mean to marry each other; nobody fancies you can find yourself married without having intended it. Be the ceremony performed externally with all the solemnity imaginable, let the words of betrothal be correctly spoken, and the ring placed on the legitimate finger; yet if the parties have no thought of marrying, and enact the whole thing

by way of a joke, nobody would look upon the proceeding as any thing else than a mock-ceremony. Decent Christians might very well regard it as a piece of profaneness, but they would not consider it a marriage in the sight either of God or of man, or as partaking in any way of the nature of a marriage. Say even, as in the eye of the law you may say if you please, that marriage is nothing more than a civil contract, the result is the same. Most comedies finish with a wedding; yet nobody supposes the two actors are really pledged to marry each other at the end of the play, notwithstanding their many public professions; nobody would really think them man and wife, even though they went through the form of being contracted in the presence of the registrar of their district, or any number of registrars, attentively regarding them from the pit, boxes, and gallery. No one would say it was a marriage *all but* the signing of the names in the registrar's book, or any other formalities which the law may prescribe; and for this simple reason, that, whether on a Pagan or a Protestant view of the matter, to constitute a marriage the parties concerned must really intend to do what they appear to do: without such intention it is but a farce.

Well, apply this to the case of Baptism. It is the doctrine of the Catholic Church that anybody, even a lay person—man, woman, or child—may baptize when there is danger of death; nay, that it is a true and valid Sacrament even though it be administered by a Jew, a heathen, or an infidel, so only that he intends to do what the Church does. I beg you to pay particular attention to this fact, because it shows the irrelevance of the common Protestant objection. I shall return to it hereafter; but I mention it here because it makes the case I am about to put a much more pertinent one than you might otherwise imagine. Suppose you were to take one of those poor Hindoos whom you sometimes see shivering at the corner of a street selling Protestant tracts, who knows nothing about the Christian religion, and has never heard of Christian baptism; but suppose you were to take and teach him the way of baptizing, bidding him do as he sees you do, but without telling him that the act had a religious meaning, or any meaning at all; and suppose, by way of amusement, or to keep himself in practice, he were to go through the form over a child or any unbaptized person, say one of his own race, such child or such per-

son (according to the Catholic doctrine) would not really be baptized, because the Hindoo had no intention of baptizing. He did not know what the Church does, and had no intention of doing what the Church does; all he intended was to do what *you* had taught him to do.

This is but common sense, or (if you prefer the term) sound philosophy. Baptizing, if, like any other action, it is to be a *human* action, that is to say, the action of a *man*, or of a rational moral agent, must be done with an intention of doing it. It is pouring water and saying words; but it is not baptizing, unless the intention of baptizing do in some way or other go along with the action. What but intention can distinguish acts externally alike? A devout mother, while in the act of washing her child, might repeat the form of baptism, meaning thereby merely to invoke the blessing of the Holy Trinity upon her offspring; a Protestant would say—at least, on his own principles he ought to say—that child was baptized; but a Catholic would say there was no baptism, simply because no baptism was intended. This is so in all human affairs; it is the intention which constitutes an act what it is. The same action, externally or materially, is quite a dif-

ferent thing when done with one intention to what it is when done with another. If I shoot at a pigeon and kill a crow, people will consider me only a very bad shot; but if I shoot at you and kill a pigeon, they will rightly judge me guilty of murder, because my intention was to kill you; whereas, on the other hand, if I aim at the pigeon and kill you instead, nobody will lay your blood at my door, though materially the act is the same as if I intended to murder you: it is the intention that makes all the difference. What a man intends to do, he does; what he does not intend to do, he does not do: he does not do it formally, or so as to make it his own act, unless he intend to do it. If you put your name to a piece of paper, and it turns out to be what you never thought of its being, a bond for £1000, no one would consider the document your own act and deed; you intended to do one thing, and by fraud or by error you did another, for which you are not responsible, and which, in right and in truth, is not your act at all.

Such is the doctrine of intention in its simplest form; and thus far, everybody, I should suppose, must see the reasonableness of it. If God wishes the sacraments of His Church to be

administered by men, He wishes that those who administer them should intend to do so. If Christ has His ministers on earth, and those ministers are men, and not brute creatures nor automaton figures, but rational beings, they must act as such when they perform ministerial acts: their acts must be human acts. But they would not be human acts, they would not be done as by rational beings, unless they were done with an intention. This is clear. Once, therefore, allow that Christ has His ministers on earth, and you, in fact, allow that these ministers must act with an intention. To deny the necessity of intention is all one with denying the existence of ministers and sacraments. This is so clear, that I am sure no Protestant would make any difficulty about the matter, if Catholics would only admit that Sacraments were *merely* human acts and nothing more; and if Catholic priests and bishops would only allow themselves to be "accounted" not "the ministers of Christ and the dispensers of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor. iv. 1), but mere mechanical agents, destitute of all real authority and power in things divine. It is because they claim to be sent by Christ, as His Father had sent Him (John xx. 21; compare Luke x. 16); claim to

rule the flock which He has purchased (Acts xx. 28; Heb. xiii. 17); to act for Him and in His name; to stand to us in His stead (2 Cor. v. 20); to be, though "earthen vessels," the depositories of His "treasure" (iv. 7); it is because they profess to regenerate by baptism; to bestow the Holy Ghost; to bless and forgive sins in the person of Christ (John xx. 23; 2 Cor. ii. 10); to change bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ; in short, it is because they declare that these acts of theirs have supernatural effects, that Protestants do not like to think they are *their* acts at all. This is why they cannot receive the doctrine of intention: it makes the Catholic priest really Christ's minister, and his acts real spiritual acts.

Before I go further, I wish you to observe that this is the true ground of the Protestant objection. Protestants profess to object to the doctrine of intention: but what they really assail is that of the priesthood and the Sacraments. I beg you then thoroughly to understand that I am defending, not the latter doctrine, but the former. I am not proving to you that priests are what we say they are, or that they have the powers we say they have, but that, as priests are *men*, their acts, to be their acts, must be

done with an intention. What powers they may possess, or what effects their acts may produce, is another and a distinct question.

However, as the two questions are practically mixed up together in people's minds, and the necessity of intention for the validity of any ministerial act is made an argument against the Catholic doctrine of the priesthood and the Sacraments, I am willing to take the Protestant objection as it commonly stands.

Protestants hate priests; and though they affect to despise, are afraid of them. They cannot get rid of the notion that they are all knaves or the tools of some malevolent power. They think, therefore, that if the Sacraments are any of them necessary to salvation, and if the intention of the minister is necessary to the Sacrament, then, indeed, people have a poor chance of being saved. At the best, a man's intention is so uncertain, and Catholics are so unable to say how much intention is necessary, and the priests are so crafty and so wicked,—many of them believe nothing at all; indeed it is quite certain that one in every twelve is a downright infidel—that it is plain the whole system is one of fraud and delusion. Poor Papists! bad priests! bad bishops! and, worst of all, that old

sinner the Pope, who thinks to do what he likes with people's souls !

One word at starting. Many Protestants—and you, kind reader, may be among the number—believe that two Sacraments at least were “ordained by Christ Himself,” and are “generally necessary to salvation.” Now I have just as much right to say that your ministers are crafty and wicked, as you have that ours are ; mind, I do not say they are crafty and wicked, because I have no wish to sin against charity ; but suppose I were to choose to say so, and suppose I were to go on to declare that you and your children were completely at their mercy, for that they might secretly substitute some other liquid for water in the Sacrament of Baptism, and for wine in that of the Lord's Supper, or that they might slur over or omit the name of one of the Three Persons in the Blessed Trinity, or otherwise alter the form of administration, what have you to answer ? If you keep to Christ's institution, you must allow that such defects invalidate the Sacrament. Whatever grace or blessing you consider annexed to it, and even if you believe that none is annexed, you must any way admit that Christ's intention is not fulfilled, and the ordinance

not administered as He willed and enjoined it to be. You will observe, too, that the result is the same, whether it proceed from wilful neglect or from simple carelessness and unintentional error. The answer you may make to this may perhaps be my answer also; but at any rate you must feel there is a corresponding difficulty in the matter. I shall have a word to say to the "Bible-only Christian" after a while.

But to come to what the Church herself has declared; for Protestants have very wild notions on the subject, and fancy that a great deal more is meant by "intention" than is meant. All that she positively requires is, that the person who administers a Sacrament should "intend to do what the Church does;" and by these words is not meant that the person should intend immediately to do what the Catholic Church, or, as Protestants would say, the Roman Church does; on the contrary, if he intend immediately to do what some Protestant sect does, the Sacrament is valid, if only as a matter of fact that sect does what the Catholic Church does. This being so, it is plain that it is not necessary to intend to confer any grace, or produce any spiritual effect, by means of a Sacrament, or even to know the nature of the

rite; it is sufficient to intend to do that particular act which the Church does. Neither faith nor knowledge are required; nay, a man may actively disbelieve and deride the doctrine of the Church, and openly protest against and abjure any sacramental efficacy in the act that he does, and even deny that it has any sacredness in it, and yet he will perform a valid Sacrament if only he intend to do that religious act which the Church does. Hence we see the irrelevance of all objections grounded on the fact that there have been at times priests in the Church who were secretly infidels; their infidelity could not invalidate their priestly acts, if only they intended to do what the Church does. And, by the way, I may observe, that an infidel is a most unlikely person to withhold his intention: he does not believe that Sacraments are any thing *with* intention; why, then, should he withhold it? Any how, personal belief or non-belief has nothing to do with the matter. It is what the Church *does*, not what she *intends*, that must be intended by the minister of a Sacrament. So the Hindoo I spoke of a page or two back would really baptize if, instead of intending to do only, as I supposed, what you had taught him to do, he were to in-

tend to do that *religious* act which he knew was done by Christians. Such baptism would be valid, and need not be repeated, even though he were ignorant for what end it was done. Nay, further, there is a sense in which the act might be performed by way of amusement, and yet be valid; as in the famous case of the great St. Athanasius when a boy, who is said to have played at baptizing one of his companions, meaning, in his childish sport, really to do what he had seen done by the Church. We know nothing, indeed, of the particulars of the case, and I do not pretend to vouch for the truth of the story; but granting the fact to be as I have stated it, Catholic theologians would hold the act to be sacramentally valid.

However, Protestants may say, that whatever be intended, there must be an intention, or the Sacrament is no sacrament, and Catholics cannot tell you how much intention is enough. Now this I positively deny. Catholics can tell you all that it is necessary for you to know on the subject, though not perhaps in the way which Protestants call upon them to do. Protestants, who have no dogmas and no theology, are always saying to us, "Show us your faith; let us look at it; let us see all you believe, or

may believe, set down clearly in black and white." They have no other notion of faith or religion except as written and printed in a book such as a man may put in his pocket and read (if read he can) whenever he likes.

They have no idea of a present, living, teaching Church, or of a faith so deeply realized and so universally diffused as to need no formal definition. I say, then, that we *do* know how much intention is enough, in the same way that we know every thing else about our religion which it is necessary for us to know. The doctrine of the Church is to be found in the decrees of Popes, and in decrees of Councils ratified by Popes; of course, it is in Scripture too, at least implicitly, but it is formally stated where I have said. And if you ask me where it was before it was thus formally stated, I answer, that it was written invisibly by the Holy Ghost in the fleshly tables of the hearts of the faithful. The present actual teaching of the Church and the present actual belief of the people,—from these may be conclusively gathered what is the Catholic doctrine on all such points as have not been positively ruled by authority. If the tide runs strongly in one direction, you may feel morally certain what the

Church would authoritatively decide on any given subject. It is absurd to say you cannot know the doctrine of the Church on some particular point because she has issued no formal decree. You may know her *mind* from her popular teaching, and from the writings of her great men and doctors.

Well, so is it with the doctrine of intention. The Council of Trent framed a decree about it, and subsequent Popes have issued formal decisions upon it; and if you are not satisfied with these, and want to know something more explicit, you may go to Catholic theologians, and ask for further knowledge at their lips, or consult their writings. I do not say it is an easy subject, nor can I see how you can expect it to be so. When we get philosophizing about wills and intentions, we are considering the acts, not of the body, but of the mind; we are discussing abstract questions of metaphysics, and are obliged to think closely and use hard words. Still, as these hard words express simple ideas, I will try and make this piece of theology plain to you in the best way I can.

Divines divide intention into three kinds; viz. actual, virtual, and habitual. Of these, actual intention is more than is required, and ha-

bitual intention is less than is required. All agree that virtual intention is enough.

First, then, of *actual* intention. Suppose two people to be quarrelling, and that each tries to say to the other the most cutting things he can think of; such an intention might last for an hour or more unbroken. Every time each spoke, he would fully mean, heart and soul, to wound the other's feelings, and direct each separate act to that end. The intention would be as keen at the middle or the termination of the quarrel as at the beginning. This, then, may be taken to illustrate an actual intention, an intention which belongs as much to one part of the proceeding as to another; which actively determines every word and look and gesture; which never tires or slackens, but keeps burning on all the time, and is as much the soul of each separate act as it is of the whole business. Now this amount of intention the Church does not consider necessary. She does not require moral impossibilities; she knows that her ministers are men, not angels, and that even the most devout are liable to distraction and wandering thoughts, and therefore she does not require a constant active intention all the while they are performing a function or administering

a Sacrament. She desires, indeed, from them the largest possible amount of reverent attention, and takes great pains, by means of her various ceremonies, to secure it; but it is not *necessary* for the validity of the Sacraments.

And now of *habitual* intention. Suppose I intended to go to church, or to say my prayers at home to-day, and suppose I performed what I intended to do, it is plain I should be doing what is commonly meant by going to church and saying prayers. But suppose I ~~went~~ to church, or knelt down and went through a form of prayers, never having intended so to do, but from sheer absence of mind, and ~~merely~~ because I had done the like yesterday; everybody would see that such acts were not really what they looked to be. I should be acting to all intents and purposes like a man in a dream: my actions would not be the effect of any present or previous will on my part. And so, if you can fancy a person baptizing, or rather seeming to baptize, in such a state of stupor and unconsciousness, or from the force of a habit so merely mechanical, that if he were asked what he was doing he would not be able to say; such act on his part would not be a ministerial or a sacramental act, any more than

if it were done by machinery or, by a "learned pig:" it would not be a *human* act; it would not be connected with any present or previous act of his will. Even if he intended to baptize before he fell into this state, still he would not do a sacramental act *while he was in it*: his intention would not flow on into what he did; it would be altogether checked and stayed; it would have no continuous existence and no continuous action; it would not live and move between whiles.

Virtual intention is different from either of these. It leads to a continued series of acts. Thus, a man goes out in the morning to work with the intention of supporting his family. He talks to his companions, hums a tune, listens to a story, while his hands mechanically continue his work; still his first intention remains in force, and really animates every act of labor he performs. Such is virtual intention; an intention which, once formed, does not die out, but continues and takes effect in spite of distractions and forgetfulnesses, and completes the action it set out to do. In like manner a bishop may put on his vestments and go into church with the intention of ordaining candidates for orders, but through human infirmity or cul-

pable inattention, may have a thousand distractions while performing the function. Still his original intention is enough, in spite of all his wanderings of mind, and the orders so conferred are indisputably valid.

What I have said, then, comes to this; that all human acts imply intention of some kind; that the Sacraments, though in effect divine acts, as being done ministerially for Christ and in His Name, are not the less human acts as being done by human beings, and therefore they require intention on the part of the minister; and lastly, that the kind of intention which is enough for the purpose is a virtual intention to do that act which the Church does. Now seriously it strikes me—and by this time I think you must be of a like persuasion—that so far from its being a hard thing to have intention enough, *it is very hard not to have all that is required.* I really believe a man might try to withhold his intention from the act, and not succeed. It is plain, too, that if he were to succeed in withholding it, he would be guilty of a mere gratuitous piece of wickedness, for which he could have no conceivable inducement except the gratification of a diabolical malice. It may be well, then, to recollect, that

they who minister Sacraments are men, not devils.

However, it may be said that, after all, it is possible to withhold one's intention, and as there *may be* absence of sufficient intention from some unknown cause, so no one can be certain that what appears to be a sacrament is a Sacrament. This is the most popular objection, and it is often put in the following startling form: If the doctrine of intention be true, no one can be sure that the priest who says Mass or hears confessions is really a priest at all; for all you know, the bishop who seemed to ordain him had no intention of ordaining him, or was incapable of ordaining, having never been validly baptized; nay, the Pope himself may be nothing but a layman, or not even a Christian.

Let me first put a question to the Protestant objector: Here is a poor uneducated man who does not even know his letters; you take up a book and propose to read to him a chapter in the Bible. Bible? how does he know that is a Bible? he has only your word for it, and you may deceive him; it may look very like one, but how can he be sure that it is the genuine book? and if it is, how does he know that you will read what is in it? what degree of certainty

has he that you will not invent something out of your own head, or artfully mix up truth with falsehood? You are but a man, and for all he knows you may be a very bad and cruel man, however good and kind you may look. But grant that it is the Bible, is it so easy a book to him that he will require no explanation of it? It is the sense, not the letter, which is the Word of God; will you not expound it to him, if he ask you? But if you expound, what degree of certainty has he that your exposition is right? In short, how can he be sure that he has heard the Word of God even in the letter, to say nothing of the sense? My good sir, your objection is really directed against the use of all human agencies and means in the matter of religion; and if it be an argument *for* any thing is an argument for Deism and even Atheism. It is certain, as you say, that men *may* deceive or err in administering Sacraments, and it is equally certain that they may deceive or err in expounding or reading what you consider the only Word of God. I am not saying that the chances of detection are equal, nor do I mean to represent the two cases as exactly parallel; all I wish you to see is, that there is a sense in which even you must

allow that the "Bible-only Christian" is in the power of man. He may be sure that the Bible is the Word of God, but he cannot be sure with the same kind of certainty that a particular book is the Bible, or that what is read to him, as from the Bible, is part of God's Word. He may be sure there is a Gospel to be preached, but he cannot be as sure that the Gospel is preached to *him*.

But I may carry the argument further, on your own principles. The Bible was composed in a learned language; how, then, is the poor man to be sure that it has been rightly translated? Books used to be written by hand; how, then, is he to be sure that it has been correctly transcribed? There were no printing-presses in old times; the Bible could not be stereotyped as now-a-days; how, then, is he to be sure that what you call the Bible is the original book, even if one ever existed? Talk about a Catholic having no certainty whether a Sacrament is really a Sacrament, why, *on your principles*, you cannot be certain that the Bible is really the Bible; it has come to you through men, and men may deceive. You say the Catholic Church is a satanic conspiracy against the truth of God, why may not a similar conspiracy

have existed in old times against the Word of God? The Bible was then in the hands of the priests, and if priests are wicked enough to withhold their intention from Sacraments, they were wicked enough to make away with the Bible itself; at least they may have suppressed certain parts, corrupted particular texts, or perverted whole passages to serve their own purposes. Your objection is an infidel objection; it goes as much against the Bible as against the Church and the Sacraments. The Bible has ever been in the hands of men, and (so to say) in their power. It comes to you through human agents, and is still ministered to you by human agents.

Now to these objections I defy any Protestant, on his own principles, to give a satisfactory answer. He must allow that, humanly speaking, the Word of God has ever depended for its existence and for its application on the ministry of man; and this is all for which it is my present object to contend. But if he really believes the Bible to be the Word of God, he will feel confident that, by some means or other, God has provided, and does provide, both for its preservation and for its effectual use among men. Well, what a good Protestant believes

with respect to the Bible, the Catholic believes with respect, not only to the Bible, but to the Sacraments of the Church. He believes that God has instituted priests and Sacraments; and believing this, he believes also that God has provided, and does provide, for the preservation and due administration of His own institution. The Protestant objection *takes for granted* that Pope, bishops, priests, and Sacraments are no parts of Christ's institution for the salvation of men. It assumes that the Church is a human device; and its whole force lies in this assumption. For if, on the contrary, the Church be a divine institution, and the Pope Christ's Vicar, and bishops His representatives, and priests His ministers, and Sacraments His ordinances, it follows surely that He will not suffer His own work to fall to ruin, but will provide for its preservation in spite of all possible dangers from the errors or malice of men. Protestants seem determined to ignore the fact, that Catholics believe in grace and in the Providence of God; and so it is easy to make game of our doctrines. It is quite true that we believe that Sacraments are void without the minister's intention; but it is true also that we believe that that intention is subject to the particular grace

and Providence of God. We believe that the ministers of the Church are gifted with a special grace for the discharge of the office with which they are invested; and that as "the hairs of our head are all numbered" under God's ordinary Providence, so not only the acts but the intentions of His ministers are overruled and ordered by that special Providence whose dominion extends even to the wills and innermost thoughts of men. Thus it never occurs to the pious Catholic to have a misgiving on the subject; and when men without faith would try to thrust doubts into his mind, he says to himself, "God is as wise as He is good. It was not at random that He put the 'treasures' of His sacramental graces into 'earthen vessels,' and made the validity of His ordinances depend on the intention of His ministers. It is *His* intention which is the soul of their intention, and which sways them without interfering with their personal freedom. I believe it is true that intention, being an act of a man's own will, may be withheld, and the Sacrament consequently be void; but I believe, nay, I am confident, that, as Sacraments are the ordinances of God, He will see to the fulfilment of His own gracious purposes."

This, then, is my answer to the Protestant objection. It is true that we cannot be certain *with the certainty of faith*,—that is, with the certainty with which we believe the being of God or the articles of the creed,—that this or that priest has been validly ordained, or this or that Sacrament has been validly administered; but we *are* certain, with the certainty of faith, that priests and Sacraments are Christ's institution; and moreover we may be *morally* certain that in any indefinite number of instances there was an intention to do what the Church does; and these two certainties are enough for all practical purposes. The Protestant has nothing like the same kind or degree of certainty in any thing that he believes.

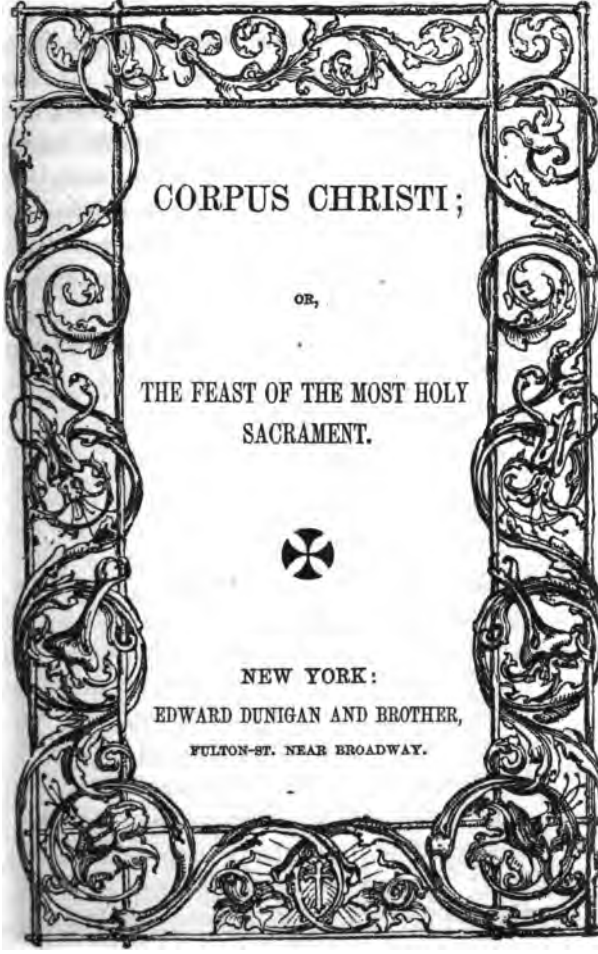
I may add, that though we cannot have the certainty of *faith*, we may have, and ought to have, the certainty of *hope*, for hope rests on the general promises of God. We hope in God, that what He has promised in the general, He will fulfil to us in the particular; and this relieves us of all personal fears and anxieties.

Remember too, that no Catholic believes that the grace of God is tied down by some fated necessity never to give itself except through Sacraments. God may, if He pleases, act by

extraordinary ways, as well as by ordinary ones, and give a soul grace which supersedes the necessity of Sacraments. Indeed, we know that the desire of baptism, when it cannot be had, and an act of true contrition for sin with the desire of confession to a priest, when confession is not possible, is deemed by the Church as sufficient to a dying person without the actual reception of either Sacrament.

You must not confound two things which are quite distinct. That Sacraments are the ordinary channels by which God gives His sanctifying graces is one thing; that God in His good pleasure may give those graces without Sacraments is another. What the Catholic Church teaches is, that there is no *Sacrament* without intention; she is not so foolish or so impious as to teach that there is no grace without Sacraments, much less does she say that another's intention is necessary for our salvation. On the contrary, she would have us be sure that God, who is love, will rather work a miracle than suffer a man of good will to be really a loser by an act of volition in another without fault of his own. It is true that priests are God's ministers, and that, as being His ministers, He acts by them in the work of salvation;

but as to the monstrous doctrine which Protestants attribute to Catholics, that He has made over His power, and His goodness, and His providence, and His grace into the hands of the priests to do as they please with the souls of men, as though God Himself stood by a helpless spectator, unable to interfere in their behalf,—this is simply one of those numerous calumnies which malice has invented, and prejudice believes out of hatred for the Catholic Church.



CORPUS CHRISTI;

OR,

THE FEAST OF THE MOST HOLY
SACRAMENT.



NEW YORK:
EDWARD DUNIGAN AND BROTHER,
FULTON-ST. NEAR BROADWAY.

THE FEAST OF THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT.

FOR the last six months the Church has been engaged in a solemn rehearsal, as it were, of the history of man's redemption; that is, of the life and death of our Blessed Lord, whereby that redemption was purchased. First, in the weeks of Advent, she commemorated His approach; then at Christmas, His birth of a pure and spotless Virgin in the stable at Bethlehem; next, His circumcision; His Epiphany, or manifestation to the wise men; His presentation in the temple at Candlemas; His fasting and temptation in the wilderness, during the forty days of Lent; His agony in the garden, His betrayal, mockery, and scourging, His crucifixion, death, and burial, in the last days of Holy Week; His rising again, on Easter Day; His forty days' converse with his disciples after it; then his ascension into heaven; and lastly, the descent of the Holy Ghost to remain with the Church for ever.

THE FEAST OF THE

And this feast of the descent of the Holy Ghost, or Whitsuntide, as it is called, may not improperly be considered to be the last in this historical series of festivals, whereby the Church thus vividly sets before us the whole course of events by which our redemption was wrought. Nevertheless, before entering upon that portion of the Christian year which has yet to intervene before Advent comes round again, and which is not marked by any such special festivals, there are two great and important holydays of a somewhat different kind. The first is Trinity Sunday, kept in honor of the deep, unfathomable mystery of the ever-blessed Trinity, Three Persons in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; the second is *Corpus Christi*, in honor of the most holy Sacrament of the Altar.

In the first of these festivals we commemorate the most stupendous of all mysteries, and we commemorate it simply as a mystery. On that day the Church does not bid us meditate either upon our creation by God the Father, our redemption by God the Son, or our sanctification by God the Holy Ghost; but she simply proposes to our adoration the mystery of the Trinity in Unity, and the Unity in

Trinity; she would have us contemplate not what God has done for us, but what He is in Himself. In the feast of Corpus Christi, however, it is not so; on this day we commemorate a mystery indeed, a most amazing mystery, but also an act of mercy and loving-kindness towards ourselves, the greatest act of love which God could ever show to His creatures, even the gift of Himself to be their daily food in the holy Eucharist.

Hence, too, a great difference may be observed in the manner of celebrating these two festivals. "The subjects of most of our festivals," it has been well said, "we can put into shape, or we can quicken our apprehension of them by holy pictures and other such devout similitudes. They relate to things, which, however sacred, fall within the province of our experience. History narrates them, art can make them visible. But of the mystery of the blessed Trinity, we feel that the ground about it is holy, and must not be rudely invaded. Elsewhere we must picture to ourselves in order to meditate; here, it helps our meditation to feel that we dare not picture." Trinity Sunday, therefore, has no outward celebration of its own different from that of

any other Sunday in the year; whereas the feast of Corpus Christi, on the contrary, is everywhere kept with all the pomp and splendor that every church can command. Towns, villages, and cities vie with one another in surrounding it with new circumstances of beauty and magnificence, so that it is one of the brightest and most joyous festivals in the whole Christian year; and not without reason, since in it we commemorate, as we have said, that which is the highest and most precious of all the gifts that the Church enjoys, the presence of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the adorable Sacrament of the Altar.

The presence of Christ within His Church is secured to her for ever by that gracious promise which He vouchsafed to His Apostles just before He was taken up from them into heaven: "Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world;" and in no way is that promise more fully and more marvellously accomplished than in His real and personal presence upon our altars in the Blessed Eucharist. This it is which makes the Christian Church so different from every other society; it is the possession of this priceless treasure—the permanent dwelling of God in

the midst of her—which causes such high and “glorious things to be said of the city of God,” (Ps. lxxxvi. 3.) Even under the old law, Almighty God vouchsafed to dwell in the midst of His chosen people in a sanctuary which He caused to be made for Him, and from which He spoke to Moses all things which He would command the children of Israel. From over the propitiatory, or mercy-seat, “and from the midst of the two cherubim which were upon the ark of the testimony,” (Exod. xxv. 22,) God vouchsafed to speak with His servant Moses “face to face, as a man is wont to speak to his friend,” (xxxiii. 11,) and through him He governed the whole people of Israel; and it was this Divine Presence in the midst of them, which constituted their especial honor and privilege, so that they could truly say, “Neither is there any other nation so great that hath gods so nigh them, as our God is present to all our petitions,” (Deut. iv. 7.) Shall we then suppose that under the new law the son of God has fulfilled in a less perfect manner the promise given to His Church, that He will be with her “all days, even to the consummation of the world?” Shall we suppose that God was more “nigh” to

the children of Israel, who were His chosen people for a time, but to whom He was afterwards to say, "You are not my people, and I will not be yours," (Osee, i. 9,) than He is to that Church whom He hath "espoused to Himself for ever?" Surely no Christian can doubt but that there is a far nearer and more blessed union between Christ and His people under the new dispensation than ever there was under the old.

When God the Son was made flesh, He "dwelt amongst men," and they saw Him and heard His voice, and conversed with Him, and touched His sacred Body, and He "came in and went out among them." But this was not to last for ever; by and by He was to "leave the world and to go to the Father;" and when this time was come, He expressly told His disciples that it was "expedient to them" that He should go. Yet how could this be, except He were to be made present to them again after a different and even more perfect manner? He promised them indeed the presence of His Holy Spirit, yet this was not to be *instead of* Himself, for He distinctly promised them His own presence also. "I will not leave you orphans; I will come to

you." "In that day you shall know that I am in my Father, and you in Me, and I in you." "If any one love Me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make our abode with him." It is clear, then, from these and other texts which might be quoted, that although the natural presence of Jesus was about to be taken away from His disciples, yet He would still be present with them after a new and supernatural manner; and that this most real and intimate, though unseen, presence would be vouchsafed not only to those who had known Him according to the flesh, but to all "those also who, through their word, should believe in Him," to all who should love Him and keep his commandments, even to the end of the world.

As a great modern saint has said, (St. Alfonso Liguori,) "because Jesus tenderly loved men, and yet was to return to His Father, He found out a means of so leaving the world as not to leave it entirely, and of going from it in such a manner as that He ceased not to remain in it. He descended on earth without quitting heaven; He ascends into heaven without quitting earth. He quitted the bosom of His

Father, yet ceased not always to remain therein; He remains likewise always with His children, though He has left them." And the especial means whereby He thus remains with them is the blessed Sacrament of the Altar. He remains indeed and is present in *all* the sacraments; in His written word too, in His ordained minsters, in the rites and ceremonies of the Church, and in other ways; but He is nowhere on earth really and substantially present as He is under the sacramental species of the Holy Eucharist. Elsewhere He is present by His Spirit; here He is present in His own *Person*. Under the forms or appearances of bread and wine are His very Body and Blood, His Soul and Divinity, in one word, Himself; even the very same Jesus who was born of the Virgin Mary in the stable at Bethlehem; the very same who was scourged and spit upon and nailed to the Cross; the very same who rose triumphantly from the grave, and afterwards ascended into heaven; the very same who now sits at the right hand of the Father. For it is of faith that under the most sacred Host which we adore upon our altars our Divine Redeemer is present, such as He is seated and reigning in the highest heavens;

so that, as in heaven the countless hosts of angels worship "the man Christ Jesus," worship the nature of man indivisibly united with the Godhead; so we on earth adore the Incarnate Word, dwelling permanently amongst us, yet hidden under the veils of bread and wine: and it was to commemorate this crowning mystery of our Redeemer's love that the festival of Corpus Christi was instituted.

In the solemn round of fasts and festivals throughout the year, every principal event in the history of our Lord and of His Blessed Mother is brought before us, each in its proper place, and with its appropriate celebration; and should not the Church, then, keep a special feast of thanksgiving for that which is her highest privilege and treasure, the source and centre of all her beauty, strength, and holiness, the adorable Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ? She commemorates indeed, to a certain degree, this dying legacy of her Lord every time that she celebrates the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, every time that she "slays her victims, mingles her wine, and sets forth her table," and calls together her children, saying, "Come, eat my bread, and drink the wine which I have mingled for you," (Prov.

ix. 2, 5.) She commemorates it also still more on the day on which it was instituted, that is, on Maunday Thursday, or the day before our Lord's crucifixion; but she was then too much absorbed in grief for the sufferings of Christ to be able fully to show forth all her love and joy and gratitude for so great a gift; and therefore the more complete commemoration has been reserved for a season when there should be no other solemnities to interfere with it; and for this reason the Thursday after the octave of Whitsunday has been chosen, thus seasonably reminding us that though our Lord has returned to the Father, nevertheless He is still with us according to His own most gracious promise. St. Thomas Aquinas, who wrote the office whereby the Church celebrates this feast, adds another reason wherefore this day should have been chosen; "forasmuch," he says, "as it was not until after the descent of the Holy Ghost, whereby alone either the Apostles or ourselves can rightly understand the dignity of so great a sacrament, that we read of their perseverance in the communication of the breaking of bread."

It is about six hundred years ago that this feast was first appointed, at a time when the

doctrine of the Real Presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament had just become the special object of attack to the impious spirit of heresy ; and it may almost be said that it was appointed by Almighty God Himself, for it began in consequence of a supernatural revelation, and was finally established only on occasion of a great public miracle. It was first made known in a vision to a recluse at Liege, and obtained a partial celebration in that diocese with the approbation of the Holy See, about the year 1246. Nearly twenty years afterwards it was extended to the whole Church by Pope Urban IV., being moved to it by a miracle that had just taken place in the neighborhood of the city where he was then residing. History has preserved to us other instances of the same miracle—blood flowing from the consecrated host upon the altar—that had happened in earlier ages, to St. Gregory the Great, for example, and others ; but none has left so lasting a memorial in the Church as this. For Urban being reminded (as he says) by this circumstance of what he had heard long ago when he filled a lower office in the Church, (as arch-deacon of Liege,) that it had been divinely revealed to some of the faithful that a festival

THE FEAST OF THE

in honor of the Blessed Sacrament should one day be universally observed throughout Christendom, immediately issued apostolic letters, dated August 11th, 1264, enjoining the celebration of this new feast of Corpus Christi upon the whole Christian world.

These letters set forth in eloquent language the reasons for the institution, namely, to denounce and refute the madness of blaspheming heretics, and to strengthen our frail and uncertain memories in the due remembrance of that most marvellous work whereof the prophet David sang by anticipation, "Being a merciful and gracious Lord, He hath made a remembrance of His wonderful works; He hath given food to them that fear Him," (Ps. cx. 4;) and whereof, when once it had been wrought, our Lord Himself expressly commanded, saying, "As oft as ye do this, do it for a commemoration of Me." "Wherefore (the Holy Father goes on to say) we think it but meet, right, just, and salutary, that as the saints, whose memories the Church venerates every day both in the Mass and in Litanies and other prayers, yet have proper feasts each for the more special commemoration of his own individual merits, and another day also for the joint com-

MOST HOLY SACRAMENT.

memoration of all together, that so every possible defect in the previous commemorations might be fully satisfied; so there should be a similar solemnity in honor of the Holy of Holies, of that which is sweetness above all sweetness, a feast wherein men should pay the Lord their God especial praises and thanksgivings for the exceeding love whereby He vouchsafes daily to come down upon our altars, and thus to fulfil that most sweet promise, 'Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world;' and again, that other saying also, 'My delight is to be with the sons of men.' Moreover, we would that in this solemnity men should carefully and anxiously examine themselves, and endeavor to supply whatever of reverence and devotion may have been wanting, through sloth and indifference, in their ordinary daily commemoration of this most holy Eucharist. For if this be done, who can doubt but that this festival will abound to the honor and glory of God, to the increase of faith, hope, and charity, and of all Christian virtues, and to the manifest advancement of the elect of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?" And he concludes the whole with the following earnest exhortations to rouse

THE FEAST OF THE

men to a worthy celebration of the feast: "Let the joy both of priests and people burst forth into songs of praise; let every mind and heart and lip and tongue pay the glad homage of exulting hymns; let the song of faith, and the eager joyfulness of hope, and the triumphant voice of charity, be heard together; let the applause of the devout and of the pure of heart unite with the jubilees of the choir; let all come together with eager alacrity and a forward will, each satisfying his zeal to the very utmost in the celebration of so great a solemnity; and oh, would that this zeal were such as to inflame the hearts of the faithful with so ardent a devotion in the service of Christ, and to cause them so to grow in His grace, that He who once gave Himself for their ransom, and now offers Himself for their food, may finally, when their earthly course is run, bestow Himself upon them as their infinite and everlasting reward!"

Such is the language in which the Sovereign Pontiff called upon the faithful to adopt this new festival in honor of the adorable Sacrament of the Altar; and everywhere the Church has responded to the invitation, so as to make it, as I have said, one of the brightest

and most gorgeous festivals in the whole Christian year: more particularly she has ransacked all the richest treasures of nature and of art to add variety and splendor to that which is the most striking characteristic of the feast, the carrying of the Blessed Sacrament in procession. It is this which specially excites the indignation of Protestants, because (as they say) the Blessed Sacrament was not instituted by Christ "to be carried about." Yet processions are but the natural expression of the feelings of the human heart on all occasions of public joy and triumph, and when we wish to show very special honor to any one. This is clear, not only from examples that might be quoted from Holy Writ, but also from the experiences of daily life. And since one great end and object of the Church in this festival is to do honor to the Blessed Sacrament, and to show forth in a very special manner our love and joy and thanksgiving for its institution, by way of testifying against the false doctrine of heretics, and of making reparation for the blasphemies of the world, and the forgetfulness of professing Christians, a procession is at once the most obvious and most effectual mode of accomplishing this object. As, therefore,

when David wished to bring up the ark of God out of the house of Abinadab, he first called together the brethren from all the countries of Israel, and the priests and the Levites, and so they brought it up "playing before God with all their might, with joyful shouting, with hymns, and with harps, and with psalteries, and timbrels and cymbals, and with sound of trumpet;" so on this festival the clergy and the people of every town and village in a Catholic country accompany the Blessed Sacrament (whereof that ark was but a figure only) in public procession, with music and chanting of hymns and of psalms, and every other demonstration of joy and gladness; and all that is best and brightest and most costly is always brought out on this occasion to do honor to Jesus. The priests are clad in their richest vestments; the Blessed Sacrament Itself is inclosed in a monstrance of pure gold or silver, most frequently adorned also with precious stones; a canopy of embroidered silk or cloth of gold is borne over It, usually (in Catholic countries) by the chief officers of state or magistrates of the city; young girls, clothed in white, go before It, strewing the way with rose-leaves and other

MOST HOLY SACRAMENT.

flowers, and acolytes swing their censers to and fro, full of sweet-smelling incense; the faithful follow after, all in holiday attire and with lighted tapers in their hands; the fronts of all the neighboring houses are hung with tapestry, or covered with flags and standards having religious devices, or at least are ornamented with garlands of flowers and evergreens; and in some places the very ground itself of the principal streets or high-roads through which the procession is to pass, is thickly covered with sand and flowers and leaves, wrought together in various patterns, so as to form one continued carpet the whole length of the way.

In Rome the procession consists of vast numbers of the regular and secular clergy; the students of certain colleges; the canons and other dignitaries of the Basilicas and other principal churches, (each community being preceded by its own cross and banner;) then the usual white-robed train of mitred abbots and bishops, patriarchs and cardinals, such as is wont to precede the Pontiff on all occasions of state; then the Holy Father himself, clad in an ample cope of white satin and gold, and borne aloft on men's shoulders under a canopy,

THE FEAST OF THE

which is supported alternately by certain public officers and the members of a few privileged colleges, (the English being one of them;) the Holy Father is not sitting, as in ordinary functions, nor arrayed with all the insignia of his dignity, as chief Bishop of Christendom, and dispensing blessings as he goes, but bending forwards in an attitude of the deepest reverence, and engaged in acts of prayer and thanksgiving to the Author and Giver of all blessings, Whom he bears in his hands, veiled under the semblance of common bread. At sight of this, the whole multitude fall upon their knees and make an act of worship to the Adorable Sacrament, and remain in silent adoration until It has passed them. The whole scene is such as can never be forgotten by those who have witnessed it; and though there may be some who may read the description of it, or even gaze on the scene itself, with the same bitter and contemptuous feelings with which Michol, the daughter of Saul, looked on whilst David was bringing up the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem, yet there are others who have been blest with far different and more salutary impressions: some, even of our own countrymen, have before now

traced the first beginnings of their deliverance from heresy, and conversion to the true faith, to the impression created on their minds by what they saw and heard during the procession of the Blessed Sacrament in the city of Rome on this day.

The same result used not unfrequently to follow the celebration of the same festival in the distant wilds of Paraguay, where, as I need hardly say, all the outward circumstances of the feast were so widely different. There the procession passed along under a series of triumphal arches formed out of the greenwood of the forest, and raised at equal intervals along the road; and these arches were adorned with festoons of flowers and of fruits, with the finest fish the poor natives had been able to catch, and stags and lions and tigers which they had slaughtered in the chase, with peacocks also and other birds, having just enough of liberty allowed them to display the brilliant colors of their plumage; the private houses, too, were adorned in a similar manner, and hung with pieces of cloth and with feathers—the most costly ornaments those simple people could boast of; at the doors stood young tigers and other wild animals, living, but secured

from doing injury; the whole way was strewn with aromatic herbs and flowers; and both among the leafy boughs of the arches and of the fronts of the houses was arranged in every variety of pattern a profusion of cakes and sweetmeats, made expressly for the purpose all of which, immediately after the procession was over, were distributed by the missionaries, first to the sick and needy, and then to those who had made the most important contributions to the beauty of the scene. Another pretty custom also, which the missionaries had taught them to observe on this day is worth mentioning; namely, that they brought to the doors of their houses the fruits of the earth which they had reaped, and the seed which they were about to sow, and laid them there in large vessels, that the blessing of Jesus passing by might rest upon them; for if even the shadow of Peter, overshadowing the sick as they lay on their beds and couches in the streets, prevailed to deliver them from their infirmities, how much greater blessings might not naturally be looked for from the real Personal Presence of Him who is Peter's Lord! Accordingly, in some parts of France, it is usual to bring the sick and infirm down into

MOST HOLY SACRAMENT.

the streets, or at least to bring them to the windows of their rooms, when the Blessed Sacrament is about to pass; and sometimes the priest even stops and comes near to them, and rests the base of the monstrance upon the head of the sick person, and the prayer of faith is heard, and the sickness is healed.

A still more common practice in Catholic countries is to make the procession, on one day during the octave, go out into the open fields, or to some commanding eminence, and from thence to give Benediction to the whole surrounding country, after having first chanted the Litanies of the Saints and other devotions appointed for the purpose. One such Benediction we once saw given at night, that is, about an hour after sunset, on the last day of the octave. The procession started from a little village in the valley, and wound its way up a conical-shaped hill of considerable height, which rose abruptly out of the centre of the narrow plain. The villages on the surrounding heights were all illuminated, and bonfires blazed on every mountain-top. From our own mountain height, at a distance of about two miles, we watched the procession wind its glittering way round the hill we have men-

tioned, until at length it formed a star-like crown upon its sharply pointed summit, and then disappeared for awhile within the little chapel that stood there. Presently the lights reappeared, a sky-rocket ascended, and the voice of our parish priest was heard, bidding us all (for the whole village was assembled) kneel to receive "the benediction of the Lord." The benediction was given amid the discharge of artillery, announcing it to all the inhabitants far and near; and thus every knee was bent throughout that densely-peopled district in one simultaneous act of adoration of their present Lord, to conclude the Corpus Christi festival. In the morning of an earlier day in the octave, the procession had gone out from our own parish church, and benediction had been given in the same way to the same tract of country, from the opposite side of the valley; and so on, each day in succession throughout the octave, was appropriated by some one parish in the diocese, as its own especial feast; thus, each parish participating in what was being done by their neighbors, and the whole together keeping one long-continued solemnity of eight days in honor of *Corpus Christi*, "the Body of Christ."

But it is useless to attempt to describe the different ways of keeping this festival which prevail in different countries; for every city, almost every town and hamlet, has its own special peculiarity; nor does the Church impose any limit on this variety, unless it anywhere threatens to interfere with "the rule of faith," or to violate the apostolic precept, "let all things be done decently and according to order." Provided these things be secure, she leaves her children at liberty to show forth their love to the blessed Sacrament by whatever outward manifestation they may be able to command, knowing that the richest and most magnificent is, after all, wholly unworthy of Him who is the King of kings, who "stretcheth out the heavens like a pavilion, and is clothed with light as with a garment;" yet, at the same time, that the very poorest will not be left without its reward, if only it proceed from a true and loving faith.

THE FEAST OF THE

HYMN THAT IS SUNG DURING THE PROCESSION.

**LAUDA, Sion, Salvatorem,
Lauda Ducem et Pastorem,
In hymnis et canticis ;
Quantum potes, tantum aude ;
Quia major omni laude,
Nec laudare sufficit.**

**Laudis thema specialis,
Panis vivus et vitalis
Hodie proponitur ;
Quem in sacræ mensæ cœnæ
Turbæ fratrum duodecim
Datum non ambigitur.**

**Sit laus plena, sit sonora,
Sit jucunda, sit decora
Mentis jubilatio ;
Dies enim sollemnis agitur,
In quâ mensæ prima recolitur
Hujus institutio.**

**In hac mensâ novi Regis
Novum Pascha novæ legis
Phase vetus terminat ;
Vetustatem novitas,
Umbram fugat veritas,
Noctem lux eliminat.**

**Quod in cœnâ Christus gessit,
Faciendum hoc expressit
In sui memoriam ;
Docti sacris institutis,
Panem, vinum, in salutis
Consecramus hostiam.**

**Sion, lift thy voice and sing ;
Praise thy Saviour and thy King ;
Praise with hymns thy Shepherd true,
Strive thy best to praise Him well,
Yet doth He all praise excel ;
None can ever reach His due.**

**See to-day before us laid
The living and life-giving Bread !
Theme for praise and joy profound !
The same which at the sacred board
Was, by our Incarnate Lord,
Given to His Apostles round.**

**Let the praise be loud and high ;
Sweet and tranquil be the joy
Felt to-day in every breast ;
On this festival divine,
Which records the origin
Of the glorious Eucharist.**

**On this table of the King
Our new Paschal offering
Brings to end the olden rite ;
Here, for empty shadows fled,
Is Reality instead ;
Here, instead of darkness, light.**

**His own act, at supper seated,
Christ ordained to be repeated,
In His memory divine ;
Wherefore now, with adoration,
We the Host of our salvation
Consecrate from bread and wine.**

MOST HOLY SACRAMENT.

**Dogma, datur Christianis,
Quod in carnem transit panis
Et vinum in sanguinem;
Quod non capis, quod non vides,
Animosa firmat fides,
Præter rerum ordinem.**

**Hear what holy Church maintaineth,
That the bread the substance changeth
Into Flesh, the wine to Blood.
Doth it pass thy comprehending?
Faith, the law of sight transcending,
Leaps to things not understood.**

**Sub diversis speciebus,
Signis tantum et non rebus,
Latent res æternæ;
Caro cibus, Sanguis potus;
Manet tamen Christus totus
Sub utraq; specie.**

**Have beneath these signs are hidden
Priceless things, to sense forbidden;
Signs, not things, are all we see;
Flesh from bread, and Blood from wine;
Yet is Christ, in either sign,
All entire, confess'd to be.**

**A sumente non concisus,
Non contractus, non divisus,
Integer accipitur:
Sumit unus, sumunt mille,
Quantum isti, tantum ille;
Nec sumtus consumitur.**

**They too, who of Him partake,
Sever not, nor rend, nor break,
But entire, their Lord receive.
Whether one or thousands eat,
All receive the self-same meat,
Nor the less for others leave.**

**Sumunt boni, sumunt mali,
Sorte tamen inæquali
Vitæ vel interitûs:
Mors est malis, vita bonis;
Vide, paris sumtionis
Quàm sit dispar exitus.**

**Both the wicked and the good
Eat of this celestial Food,
But with ends how opposite!
Here 'tis life, and there 'tis death;
The same, yet issuing to each
In a difference infinite.**

**Fracto demum Sacramento,
Ne vacilles, sed memento
Tantum esse sub fragmento,
Quantum toto tegitur:
Nulla rei fit scissura,
Signi tantum fit fractura,
Quâ nec status nec statura
Signati minuitur.**

**Nor a single doubt retain,
When they break the Host in twain,
But that in each part remains
What was in the whole before;
Since the simple sign alone
Suffers change in state or form,
The Signified remaining one
And the same for evermore.**

**Ecce panis angelorum
Factus cibus viatorum;
Verè panis filiorum,
Non mittendus canibus:
In aguris præsignatur,
Cum Isaac immolatur,
Agnus Paschæ deputatur,
Datur manna patribus.**

**Lo! upon the altar lies,
Hidden deep from human eyes,
Bread of angels from the skies,
Made the food of mortal man
Children's meat to dogs denied,
In old types foreshifted;
In the manna heaven-supplied,
Isaac, and the Paschal Lamb.**

FEAST OF THE M. H. SACRAMENT.

Bone Pastor, Panis vere,

Jesu, nostri miserere ;

Tu nos pasce, nos tuere.

Tu nos bona fac videre

In terrâ viventium.

Tu, qui cuncta scis et vales,

Qui nos pascis hic mortales,

Tuos ibi commensales,

Cohæredes et sodales

Fac sanctorum civium.

Amen. Alleluia.

28

Jesu ! Shepherd of the sheep !

Thou Thy flock in safety keep.

Living Bread ! Thy life supply ;

Strengthen us, or else we die

Fill us with celestial grace :

Thou who feedest us below !

Source of all we have or know !

Grant that with Thy Saints above,

Sitting at the feast of love,

We may see Thee face to face.

HOW DID ENGLAND BECOME
CATHOLIC?

AND

HOW DID ENGLAND BECOME
PROTESTANT?



NEW YORK:
EDWARD DUNIGAN AND BROTHER.
FULTON-ST. NEAR BROADWAY.

HOW DID ENGLAND BECOME CATHOLIC,

AND

HOW DID ENGLAND BECOME PROTESTANT?

INTRODUCTION.

HOW CERTAIN TRAVELLERS FORSOOK THEIR GUIDES, AND HOW
IT FARED WITH THEM.

A COMPANY of travellers were once journeying together towards a great city in the East. Their road lay through a dangerous country, and was rather intricate; but they had a good party of guides who seemed perfectly at home in it, and so they went fearlessly and steadily on. However, the way was far from being as smooth and easy as the travellers would have liked it to be; it led them sometimes through thorny brakes, and almost always was on an ascent, sometimes a very steep one. This did not at all suit the taste of some of the travellers, who began to complain, and to whisper to

INTRODUCTION.

one another that they had very serious doubts whether this difficult, disagreeable road was the right one. "Depend upon it," said one, "these guides are taking us wrong, and bringing us into all these difficulties, just to make themselves of consequence, and to make a demand upon us afterwards for more pay." "And, after all," said another, "what do we want of guides? You see they have each a map of the country in their hands: if we had but that, we could find our way for ourselves just as well as they can tell it us, and much better." At this bright thought they were much delighted; and seizing several copies of the map, they knocked down such of the guides as attempted to offer any resistance, and set off across the country to find out the right road by themselves. But though they were all together in the same place at the moment when they did this, and although the copies of the map which they had seized were all exactly alike, yet, as soon as they began to move forward, they immediately took different directions, so that in a few minutes they were completely scattered. Some, indeed, steadily followed the few guides who survived, and these kept close together, just as they had

INTRODUCTION.

travelled on from the first; but of the rest scarcely any two chose the same path; one darted off in this direction, another in that, each all the while shouting out that he was right and the rest wrong; and what seemed most strange, each confidently appealing to the map he held in his hand in proof of what he said. Yet, as you have already heard, it was the self-same map, of which they all had good and perfect copies; but somehow or other, they each contrived to understand its lines and colors differently. Perhaps there was some key to it which they did not possess, or did not know how to use; but this is a part of their history which we are not going to inquire about to-day. I will only add, that when those travellers, who had remained faithful to the old guides, saw all this disturbance amongst those who had deserted them,—when they saw how some sunk into hidden pits and disappeared altogether, while the rest still kept on shouting and running hither and thither,—they congratulated one another very heartily that they had not been seduced into following the example of the runaways, whose chance of reaching the great city they thought not much to be depended on.

INTRODUCTION.

Now, is not the state of the people of this country at the present moment with reference to matters of religion very much the same as that of these runaway travellers with reference to their knowledge of the road in which they ought to travel? We are all agreed,—at least all for whom these pages are intended,—that God has revealed to man the way of truth; nay, we have our map of the road; there is a book in the hands of every one of us, which we are all agreed in calling the Word of God, and which, as some of us say, contains this way of truth so plainly, fully, and distinctly taught, that there can be no mistake about it; and yet as to what that way of truth is, we hold as many different opinions as did those travellers as to the right road. Moreover, in one very serious respect, we are far worse off than the travellers; there may be more than one road leading to a city; but there cannot—if God has really revealed any religion at all—there cannot be more than one religion that is true. Any how, two roads leading in opposite directions cannot both end in the same place; and two religious doctrines which contradict each other cannot, by any possibility, both be true.

INTRODUCTION.

Yet we meet with such contradictions in doctrine at every step in this country, and that on points which are of real, living consequence to us all. To take only one instance: we most of us carry our little infants to be baptized; and any mother whose thoughts go deeper than the mere external ceremony, would naturally wish to know what good she may expect her child to receive from it. Let her ask her religious neighbors: some will tell her that the child is cleansed in this water from the stain of sin which he has inherited from Adam; others will say that this is quite a mistake, that the child gets no good at all, that it is a mere ceremony; others, again, will tell her that it is wrong to baptize her children whilst they are so young, she should wait till they are grown up and able to think and judge for themselves; and lastly, there are others who will not hesitate to assure her that they ought never to be baptized at all.

This is only one point among a thousand that might be selected; but it is a very important one; and even if it were the only point on which there was a difference of opinion, it would be extremely puzzling to any who trouble themselves to think about religion

INTRODUCTION.

at all. What shall we say, then, when we consider that there is not a single doctrine upon which there is not a similar variety of opinions; when we are not even agreed on the one great doctrine which, one would think, must concern the very foundation of our religion: I mean, as to whether our blessed Lord Jesus Christ is God as well as man!

Now this is so strange a state of things, that one cannot help asking whether it was always so; whether the Christian religion made its first appearance in this country in that motley dress and with that discordant voice which it now has; or, if not, how it became such as it now is among us? in other words, we would ask two plain and simple questions: first, How did England become Christian? and, secondly, How did it become Protestant?

HOW DID ENGLAND BECOME CHRISTIAN ?

THIRTEEN hundred years ago—that is, five hundred and fifty years after our Lord's birth—England was a heathen country. I do not mean to say, that there was not a single Christian in it: there were a few; but those few had been driven into the mountains of Wales and Cornwall by the Angles, or Anglo-Saxons, our forefathers, from whose name we are now called English. These Angles were pagans, and they were not the first inhabitants of this country, but had come over from their own land, Germany, on pretence of helping the native people, the Britons, against their enemies the Scots. This they really did at first; but afterwards they turned their arms against the Britons themselves, and, step by step, conquered the whole island, making a dreadful slaughter of the people, and driving such of them as were left into those parts which I have mentioned. Whether these few Christian natives were afraid to come out and show themselves, or whether they were not very zealous about their religion, I cannot say; any how it is

certain, that, from some cause or other, they did not exert themselves to convert the heathen people who had conquered them. The whole of England, excepting only Wales and a part of Cornwall, lay in utter heathen darkness and ignorance, in the year of our Lord 596.

One day, however, early in the spring of the following year, there landed on the coast of the island of Thanet, in Kent, a company of venerable men, about forty in number, clad in long black habits, with one at their head, whom they seemed all to reverence and obey; and as soon as they were landed, they sent messengers, (whom they had brought from France as interpreters,) to the king of the country, telling him that they were come from Rome, the bearers of glad tidings, which, if he would but hear them, would bring him to never-ending happiness after death. The king, whose name was Ethelbert, seems to have guessed immediately what this meant; for, though he was himself a heathen, he had yet heard of the Christian religion, because he had a Christian wife, called Bertha, a princess from France. Therefore he sent a courteous message to the strangers, praying that they would remain in the island where they had landed, and where

he gave directions that they should receive all hospitality, and promised soon to visit them.

Accordingly, after a few days, the king went to the island with a great company of people, and invited the strangers to a conference, sitting in the open air; for, from some superstitious fancy, he was afraid of meeting them under a roof. They came then into his presence, one of them bearing a silver cross for their standard, and another a picture of our blessed Lord; and all with one voice singing litanies, and praying to God for their own salvation and that of the people to whom they had come. Then, at the king's command, they sat down; and their chief, who was called Augustin, preached, by means of his interpreters, the gospel of Christ to the king and all his nobles; and the king made him a kind and wise answer, that the words he had spoken seemed of blessed promise; but that they were new to him, and that he could not leave his old religion for a new one, without understanding the reason of the case; since, however, he could not doubt but that the reverend strangers really believed themselves what they desired to teach him, and had nothing in view but his own good and that of his people, he would not in-

jure them, but rather receive them with due hospitality, and in no way hinder them from preaching the faith.

And he certainly did receive them with princely hospitality, for he set apart for their use a large mansion in Canterbury, which was the capital city of his kingdom, and provided for them maintenance, giving them at the same time, as he had promised, full liberty to teach and to preach. They went, therefore, to the city of Canterbury, carrying before them, as at their landing, the cross and the picture of our Lord, and chanting with one voice this prayer: "We pray thee, O Lord, of Thy great mercy, that Thy fury and Thine anger may be turned away from this city, and from Thy holy house; for we have sinned. Alleluia."

When thus established in Canterbury, we are told that they led an apostolic life, in fastings, in watchings, and in continual prayer; and preached the Word of God to as many as they could reach, despising the things of this world, as matters in which they had no concern, and receiving from those whom they taught just what was needful for their daily food, and no more. And the result of all this was, that many, admiring the innocence of

their lives and the heavenly sweetness of their teaching, believed and were baptized; and the king himself, before long, having searched out the truth of their doctrine, was convinced, gave up his idols, and became a Christian. He was then, of course, earnestly desirous that his people also should receive the true faith; but this he left entirely to their own conscience, for he had been taught by those who had instructed him in the Christian faith, that the service of Christ must be, not enforced, but of free-will. However, it was not long before he had the happiness of seeing his whole kingdom, or at least great numbers in it, become Christian;—and then Augustin, according to commands which he had received—not from the king, but from some one else, whom we shall mention presently,—went over to France, to the Archbishop of Arles, and by him was consecrated the first Archbishop of Canterbury.

Thus was the seed of the faith first sown among our forefathers; and soon it grew up into a great tree; for, before a hundred years had passed, the country was Christian from sea to sea, and the whole nation of the Angles, as we are told, praised God “with one heart and with one voice.”

We may gather from what has been said, 1. that the Christianity which was thus gladly received by our forefathers was one religion, not many, for it was first preached by one company of men living all together; and 2. that it was one with the religion of other countries, or else Augustin would scarcely have gone into France to be made bishop. Here, then, are two respects in which it was mightily unlike English Christianity of the present day, for that is altogether different from the Christianity of all other countries, and also altogether divided against itself.

What, then, was the Christianity of Augustin? Who were he and his company? Whence did they come, and who sent them?

To this I answer, that their Christianity was the Catholic faith,—that they themselves were Catholic monks,—that they came from Rome,—and that they were sent by the Pope.

Impossible, you will say; if they had been Catholics, they would not have prayed to God, as we hear they did, but to images of wood and stone; still less would they have taught King Ethelbert to leave his people's religion to their own consciences; on the contrary, they

BECOME CHRISTIAN?

would certainly have made him torture and burn them; indeed, if they had been Catholics, so wise and good a king as Ethelbert would never have received them at all;—and, as to the Pope having sent them, we know that he is Antichrist, and how could Antichrist send missionaries to bring people to the worship of Christ?

Ah, these are difficulties which I cannot attempt to answer all in a minute; indeed, I shall not attempt at present to give a direct answer to any of them; I would only just beg you to reflect whether you are quite sure that all these statements are true. Are you quite sure that Catholics pray to graven images, instead of God? Are you quite sure that the Catholic religion is cruel and intolerant? Are you quite sure that the Pope is Antichrist? However, whether you are sure of these things or not, and whether these things really are so or not, makes no difference to our present history. Any how, it is certainly and undeniably true, that Augustin and his companions were Catholic monks, and that they came from Rome, and that it was the Pope who sent them.

Who was this Pope, then? and how came

HOW DID ENGLAND

he to send missionaries to England, to convert our heathen forefathers to Christianity?

There was a man named Gregory, a Roman by birth, and of noble family, who in the bloom of youth wishing to give himself up entirely to the service of Christ, retired from the world into a monastery in Rome, which still exists, and where the very rooms he inhabited, the very table at which he used to feed the poor, and many other memorials of him, may still be seen. Here he labored by prayer and obedience to perfect his soul in holiness, and so far succeeded, that, as we are told, all worldly things seemed to be under his feet, and his spirit burst, as it were, the prison of the flesh through holy contemplation. However, he was not only a very spiritually-minded man, but also a man of great talent; and so he could not be left in peace in his monastery, but was sent by those whom he was bound to obey to the great city of Constantinople, on some business to the Roman emperor, whose court was held there. But he was so afraid of his soul losing in the world some of the holiness it had gained in retirement, that he used to keep always near him some brethren he had brought from the monastery; and with them

BECOME CHRISTIAN?

he devoted to prayer and study every moment he could spare from business. At last, to his great joy, he was allowed to return to Rome.

One day he was walking in the forum, or market-place at Rome, which is not very far from his monastery, and he saw standing there, to be sold as slaves, a group of young boys, whom he knew at once, from their golden hair, blue eyes, and fair blooming cheeks, were not Italian. He asked who they were; and when he was told that they were from the distant island of Britain, and belonged to a pagan people, who were all of the same complexion, he sighed deeply, and said, "What a pity that men of such radiant countenances should be in the power of the spirits of darkness!" And then, having inquired their name, and being told that they were called Angles, "Angles!" he said, "Angels, rather,—if they were but Christian." From the moment of that accidental meeting, the longing wish to turn that people of fair-haired strangers to the faith of Christ was uppermost in Gregory's heart. His first desire was to come himself to preach to them; and this he attempted to do; but the Roman people, by whom he was much beloved, would not hear of his leaving the city; so he

HOW DID ENGLAND

was obliged for a time to forego his charitable purpose.

At last, however, strange as it may seem to you, this good, loving, holy man was made Pope. And then, as he had full power to send missionaries wherever he pleased, his first care was to dispatch Augustin and his companions to England. They did not much like the prospect of their work; because, in the first place, they had a new and what they considered a barbarous language to learn; and, in the next place, all they heard of our forefathers themselves was not very encouraging; for, if the truth must be told, I am afraid they were not at that time much better than barbarians. Disheartened by these considerations, they actually sent back messengers to Gregory, after they had gone some way on their journey, to beg to be let off. But he would not hear of it; on the contrary, telling them to remember what our Lord has said, that he who putteth his hand to the plough and looketh back, is not worthy of the kingdom of God, he encouraged and commanded them to persevere; and it was by his command also, both that Augustin, when he had succeeded in converting so large a number from the kingdom of Kent,

BECOME CHRISTIAN?

went over to Arles to be consecrated, and also that the Archbishop of Arles consecrated him.

And now one word more before we close this first part of our subject. How came the Pope to have such power, that he could send Augustin and his brethren hither and thither as he pleased? and that he could command the Archbishop of Arles to consecrate Augustin bishop? and how came they all to obey him?

I suppose you know that the Pope is the Bishop of Rome, and that Rome at the time of our Saviour's birth was the capital city of the whole world. You know also, that when our blessed Lord left His home at Nazareth, to preach throughout Judea the glad tidings of His kingdom, He called to him, one after another, twelve men, His twelve Apostles, whom He chose out of the world to be the princes and pastors of His Church in His stead, when He should have ascended up into heaven. One of these, called Simon, He was pleased to mark out for especial honor; first, by giving him the name of Peter, which signifies a rock, telling him at the same time, that on that rock He would build His Church; then, by committing to him the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and lastly, after His resurrection, by

thrice solemnly charging him to feed His sheep. From these and other marks of honor conferred by our Lord on St. Peter, the whole Christian Church from the beginning looked upon him as the Prince of the Apostles. After our Lord's death, St. Peter went to Rome, and became bishop of that city; and both he, and all the bishops who have come after him, one after another, without interruption, even to the present day, have always been looked upon by the whole Catholic Church as its visible head upon earth, whom all Christians in every nation throughout the world are bound to obey. These Bishops of Rome, the successors of St. Peter, then, are the Popes; and one of these was St. Gregory the Great, the same of whom we have been speaking.

The Christianity, then, that was first preached to our forefathers was the Christianity of Rome, the Roman Catholic faith; and those by whom it was preached, and who caused it to be received among us were, as we have seen, and as no one can pretend to deny, a good Pope, a good Catholic monk, and a good king; and truly the blessing of God was upon them and upon their work.

Thus we have answered the first of the two

BECOME CHRISTIAN?

questions we proposed to ourselves: viz., How did England become Christian? It remains that we should now answer the second: How did England become Protestant? that we should examine whether Protestantism was brought into this country by persons and under circumstances equally good in themselves, and equally likely to bring with them the blessing of God.

■

HOW DID ENGLAND BECOME PROTESTANT?

WE have now seen how England became Christian; and perhaps it has been a surprise to some who had never before looked into the matter, to find that her conversion to Christianity and to Catholicism was one and the same thing: that Antichrist, (as they have been used to account him,) and no other, was the first preacher of Christ to the English people.

We have seen, too, how gladly the people listened to that preaching, and how rapidly the faith spread among them, though they were not at that time one kingdom as now, but several. Still, as signal-fires kindled on mountain-tops have sometimes carried in an instant the tidings of a glad event from one end of a country to the other, so it was with the light of the Gospel. First, shining on the shores of Kent, it flashed from thence, as in a moment, to distant Northumberland; then the eastern provinces caught it; then, in turn, the midland, the southern, and the western; and the faith thus established lasted undisturbed for about a thousand years.

During this period, England was part of the great Christian family, knit with all the other nations of Europe in the bond of a common faith, and a common obedience to the head of the Church, the successor of St. Peter. There were wars and fightings during this period between kingdom and kingdom, just as there are now; but there was at least one tie of brotherhood which bound the men of different nations to each other; the dove with the olive-branch of peace hovered at least over the ark of God; all were alike children of the Church. If an Englishman was away from his country, lonely, and sick of strange faces and strange voices, he had but to go to the house of God, and he could fancy himself at home again. There he would be greeted by the same sights and sounds that he had been used to in his own village-church in England; he would assist at the same holy sacrifice; he would hear the tones of the same Latin tongue, the common language of the Church in all lands; the very sounds of the music,—the lights on the altar,—the sweet breath of the incense,—all these things would be to him dear and familiar.

And, as we were one in faith with other nations, so we were also one with ourselves.

There was no doubt then whether our babes were regenerated in their baptism,—no dispute about faith and works,—no question as to whether or not our Lord is to be adored as God. On these, and all other points of Catholic doctrine, the whole English people believed as one man. And, as agreement gives strength, England was strong in faith, and abundant in those noble deeds which are the fruits of faith; for during those thousand years sprung up all those beautiful churches which are still the pride of our country, all our glorious cathedrals, all our most important public charities, the grammar-schools in our towns, meant for the children of the poor, and our two great Universities. All these were the growth of Catholic piety, though Catholics are now shut out from the benefit of them. And other buildings too there were, of great usefulness to all, but especially to the poor, which exist no longer except in their beautiful ruins. But of these we shall speak presently; for we must come at once to our main subject, **HOW DID CATHOLIC ENGLAND BECOME PROTESTANT?**

Now she became Protestant by slow degrees; that is to say, it took some time to bring her into her present state as to matters of religion,

BECOME PROTESTANT ?

but it was by a single act that she ceased to be Catholic. A single stroke of the axe cut her off from the tree of which she had been a living branch; but it required many and many a stroke to hew the dead wood into an idol for the people to worship. That first stroke was dealt by one of her kings; King Henry VIII. declared himself and his kingdom independent of the Pope in spiritual things as well as temporal, and himself the Supreme Head of the Church in England. And this supreme headship his son also held after him, a child of nine years old; and his daughter Elizabeth held and vigorously exercised the same. And in like manner Queen Victoria, at the present day, bears the title and fills the office of Supreme Head of the English Church.

Let us examine a little into the cause of this strange act, unheard of before in the history of Christendom; and judge for ourselves whether the counsel that prompted it came from God.

King Henry VIII. had been married for seventeen years to a Spanish princess named Catherine, and had had several children by her, when he suddenly professed that his conscience was troubled with scruples as to the lawfulness of his marriage, because his wife

had been before married, or, more probably, only espoused to his brother Arthur, who had died before he was fifteen years old. People rather smiled at Henry's scruples, and had small faith in their sincerity; for though such marriages, like those between first cousins, were not allowed by the Church in a general way, yet, as she did not consider them as actually sinful, but only undesirable, she reserved to herself the right of allowing them in certain cases, which allowance was called a Dispensation. All people were quite contented in those days to leave such matters to be settled by the Church; for they did not pretend to be wiser than the Church, and thought the Church was more likely to know what was right than any single individual, however clever or learned he might be. Therefore, as Henry had received a dispensation for his marriage with Catherine, no one, as I have said, was very ready to believe that he could really be in much trouble of conscience on the subject; and as the queen was eight years older than himself, they thought it highly probable that some other reason lay at the bottom of the scruple. And so it proved, for it was very soon no secret that the king was in love with a young lady of the court,

named Anne Boleyn, and was desperately bent on making her his wife. His first step was to endeavor to prevail on the Pope, by entreaties, by promises, and by threats, to declare his marriage with Catherine unlawful, and so to sanction his putting her away, and marrying another woman.

Would St. Gregory the Great, think you, have granted such a request? Would St. Peter, his predecessor? Certainly not; and neither did his successor, the Pope of King Henry's time. If we were but acquainted with the history of Catholic days, of which we are brought up in worse than ignorance, we should see how, in spite of there having been some—very few—bad Popes, (just as there was a Judas among the Apostles,) yet, on the whole, the Popes were the protectors of the weak, and, above all, the guardians of the sanctity of marriage. Often and often the fierce kings of this world quarrelled with them, and rebelled against them on this very account; but none so fiercely, or with such fatal consequences, as this Henry of England. For, as we have said, when the Pope refused to grant him leave to work his will, he made short work of the matter, cut off himself and his

people from obedience to the Pope, and therefore from the Catholic Church, and proclaimed his own supreme headship. How he exercised the same, whether the people of England found it easier to be governed in spiritual things by a king than by a Pope, we shall see presently ; but I will now just rapidly follow out his domestic history to the end, that we may see of what stuff his character was made.

He was too impatient to wait for a divorce, or any thing of the kind ; so he first married Anne privately, and then set up a spiritual court under Thomas Cranmer, whom he had made Archbishop of Canterbury, and of whom I will tell you presently, to pronounce him divorced from Catherine. This marriage turned out much as one would expect. Henry soon grew tired of his new wife, as he had of his old one, and fell in love, as before, with one of the ladies in waiting ; but this time he dealt in no such mild measures as a divorce ; or, at least, the divorce was immediately followed by a stroke yet more decisive. The poor frail thing, for whose sake he had cut off his country from the Church, was seized, sent to the Tower, tried on contradictory charges,—some true perhaps, some impossible,—

found guilty, however, (for all knew the king's pleasure,) and at last beheaded on Tower Hill; while Henry, to show his joy, dressed himself in white garments, (as she had done in her short-sighted folly, some weeks back, at the death of the good Queen Catherine,) and the very next day was publicly married to Jane Seymour.

This third wife happily died in child-bed, in about a year from this time; and, after her, we read of another wife divorced, and another beheaded; and a sixth, who, though she did at last manage to survive him, yet ran sundry very narrow risks of her life. Indeed, towards the close of his reign, the tyrant Henry seems absolutely to have lived on blood. He had become, by that time, bloated almost out of the shape of humanity, and a prey to fearful disease; yet none dared whisper to him that his end was drawing near, for his savageness had grown into almost frenzy; and at last death came, and saved many noble heads which were waiting in prison for the stroke of the executioner.

Such was Henry VIII., the Ethelbert of the new Christianity in England. Which do you like the best? Which, think you, did Al-

mighty God like the best? Which, do you think, acted most like a Christian? And whose Christianity do you prefer? But wait a moment; let us first hear a little about the Augustin of this new Christianity.

Thomas Cranmer, whom we have before mentioned, was first brought into notice, while still a Cambridge scholar, by suggesting that the question of the king's marriage should be submitted to all the Universities in Europe. This delighted the king, as it gave him the prospect of being able to make out something of a case against the Pope; and from that moment Cranmer became his chief favorite, and was soon made by him Archbishop of Canterbury. At his consecration as Archbishop, he had, of course, to take the usual oath of obedience to the Pope; but, nevertheless, we find him perfectly ready to take the oath of supremacy, as it is called, so soon as the king required it of him, though the object of that oath was precisely to renounce obedience to the Pope, and to promise it to the king instead.

Then, again, he was in the secret of the king's private marriage with Anne Boleyn; yet he presided at a spiritual court held after that marriage, and there declared Henry's first

marriage with Catherine unlawful, urging him afterwards, "at his soul's peril, to discontinue such incestuous intercourse."

After this, as the tyrant's will changed, he pronounced just as readily his divorce from Anne Boleyn, or rather declared that marriage from the beginning to have been null and void, and the issue thereof illegitimate; while, at the same time, in his place in Parliament, he voted her death as an unfaithful wife. In short, there was no deed of injustice, nor, as we shall presently see, of rapine or blood, for which King Henry did not find a ready abject tool in Cranmer.

But, you will say, there must have been a great deal to be said for the king's supremacy, or people would not have received it; a claim never before heard of in Christendom could scarcely have been listened to, unless very strong arguments had been brought forward in its support. And strong arguments certainly were brought forward,—not drawn exactly from Scripture or from reason, but sufficiently convincing, as it seemed, to the men of that generation, viz., the axe, the halter, and the quartering block. And some, very many, really endured these things rather than part

with their Catholic birthright; for you must not suppose that all in that age were Cranmers. Sir Thomas More, the best Lord High Chancellor whom England ever had, died in this cause; so, too, did Dr. Fisher, Bishop of Rochester; and multitudes among the people suffered under the hangman's hands all that frightful process of disembowelling and quartering, which has been the disgrace of our country, as the punishment of treason, almost to our own days.

Let us now see how this supremacy was first exercised. There are few parts of England where there are not to be found old ruins of a peculiar character, masses of gray stone, covered with the ivy of three centuries; yet not so covered but that we may see that they are the remains of buildings of exceeding beauty; for the garlands of wild flowers, which seem to grow there with more than common luxuriance, twine in and out through the rich stone work of pointed windows, or fling themselves abroad in long streamers, where a tall shaft, round which they have been clinging, breaks short off, just as it was beginning to curve upwards into a bold arch. I am sure the memory of almost every one must supply a scene an-

BECOME PROTESTANT?

swering more or less to this description; for the names of Tintern, and Glastonbury, and Wenlock, and Furness, are almost as familiar to us as those of London and York.

Let us just try to picture to ourselves what the face of the country must have been when these buildings yet stood in their entirety, each in the midst of smiling cultivated fields, and each inhabited by a large community: for these were no other than the monasteries and convents of which we have all heard tell.

We have seen that St. Augustin and his fellows were monks, and that Ethelbert granted for their use a mansion in Canterbury, thus founding the first English convent; and, after him, many an English King gave lands and money for the building of such in other parts of the country; and more than one, at the close of life, even laid down their sceptres and retired to one of those quiet dwellings, to prepare for death in penitence and prayer. But King Henry saw these things in a different light. He looked on the broad abbey-lands, and thinking their revenues would be better poured into the royal treasury than remaining in the hands of their rightful owners, determined once and for ever to sweep away all the religious orders

in England, and to seize on their possessions for himself and his nobles, whom he bribed by a share in the spoils to assist in carrying out his wicked project.

To give it something like a color of justice, he sent out a royal commission to inquire into the state of the monasteries, and to report abuses. We can easily imagine what amount of fair play the monasteries had to expect under such circumstances; and no one pretends that they had fair play at all. "Where only a pretence was wanted for their suppression," says a Protestant writer, "it was easy for a prince possessed of such unlimited power to find or feign one and care was taken to defame those whom the court intended to ruin."

Yet, though even Protestants allow this, and though little enough, after all, came out against the monks in the report of the commissioners, still the impression has remained on the mind of the English people, that the monastic life was so idle and useless, that, however ruffianly it was to destroy the monasteries, still it is any how to be rejoiced at, that we are rid of the monks. But I think people would feel differently on the subject, if they only looked at it

a little, and that in one or two different points of view.

Think of the beautiful abbey church,—and every monastery had its church,—not left, like England's churches now-a-days, to dust and cobwebs from Sunday to Sunday; but open every day in the week, and all day long, with Masses at all hours of the morning, and holy offices of prayer and praise going on from sunrise to sunset, and almost from sunset to sunrise again in some of them. Surely the presence of such churches up and down the land must have been useful, if it be useful for people, in the midst of the bustle of this working world, to be reminded that they have souls.

Or, if you despise the convent church, you would scarcely have despised the convent school, where the children of the poor flocked for instruction, and where many who were discovered to possess talents above the common order, received such an education as enabled them to rise to any station for which their talents or dispositions may have fitted them. How many of the great men who rose from low degree in those days, were first trained in the convent school! Then the monks were the

best of landlords and the best of masters; and from their continually adding to their buildings and improving their lands, must have given constant employment to the poor in their neighborhood.

I say nothing of their actual alms-deeds, of the sick and aged who thronged their doors, as they still do the doors of convents everywhere, and were never sent away empty. This lavish alms-giving of convents is always sneered at by men of the world as foolish and hurtful; and I have not time now to stop and dispute the matter with them. But religious bodies have always considered their revenues as the patrimony of the poor; and that the poor, in asking alms, are only claiming the payment of a debt which they have no right to withhold from them. And, after all, what have Protestants given in exchange for this "foolish and hurtful" charity?

Poor-laws, by which all classes are burdened, and poor-houses, in which the poor are punished for their poverty; where food is dealt out in the smallest possible quantities on which human creatures can live, and where man puts asunder those whom God has joined together.

But to return to our history. It is difficult

to believe what followed after the return of the royal commission, and yet it is true. Six hundred and forty-five monasteries were suppressed; in some of these, the monks, terrified by threats, and persuaded by the promise of a provision for their lives, gave up their property without resistance; others refused to do so, and their lives were the forfeit. Thus the last Abbot of Glastonbury was hanged, drawn, and quartered, for high treason, on the Torre Hill, which overlooks his noble abbey. Ninety colleges, more than 2000 chapels, and 110 hospitals were utterly destroyed. It is impossible to describe the scene of spoliation,—whole libraries of books were torn in pieces for the sake of their jewelled clasps and embroidered covers; the convents were absolutely sacked for plunder; the very churches were pillaged; tombs broken open; and the sacred vessels of the altar seized and borne away to the tyrant. And, last of all, the buildings themselves were to be pulled down; for Henry well knew how dearly the people loved them, and that they would never rest in quiet till all hope was gone that their friends would ever be restored to their possessions.

. Yes, whatever the people of England now

think of monasteries, in those days they loved them dearly, and there was a bitter cry through the length and breadth of the land when the king raised his hand against them. But it was the cry of the poor, and none heeded it: by fire and sword at first, and by the hand of the executioner afterwards, it was soon put down, and the monasteries, dwellings, churches, and all, were pulled stone from stone, or blown up with gunpowder, and left much as we now see them. Any who read the account of those days, would think it was a story of wild barbarous heathens plundering a conquered country, not of a Christian people reforming their religion.

But others besides monks fell under the wrath of Henry. At this time, what are called Protestant opinions had begun to be spread abroad in Germany by Luther and others, and had found their way to a considerable degree into England. Cranmer himself, as he afterwards declared, was, during all this time, a Protestant in his heart, disbelieving many Catholic doctrines, more especially that of our Lord's real presence in the blessed Sacrament of the Altar. But this was not at all the case with Henry himself. He hated Luther most

cordially, against whom he had once written a book, and all the new doctrines of the Reformers. In his own wicked life he disregarded all the obligations of religion, and he had no wish to make any change at all in the religious belief of the people, except in the one point of his own spiritual supremacy. But to take out one stone of the spiritual building is to endanger the whole, and the English Church began to fall to pieces much faster than Henry could put it together again. He set about it, however, with his old tools, the axe and the halter, to which he now added another, the stake; for while he hanged and disembowelled Catholics for refusing to take the oath of supremacy, at the same time he burnt Protestants to death for denying the real presence in the blessed Sacrament: Cranmer all the while assisting in both the hangings and the burnings, though he had himself once taken an oath of obedience to the Pope, and though he himself totally disbelieved that very doctrine of the real presence; and so the work of murder went on, until the country almost perished under the fearful tyranny.

Truly has it been said, then, even by a Protestant writer, that the so-called Reformation in

BECOME PROTESTANT?

England was a work "begun in lust, strengthened by plunder, and cemented with blood." We have not space here to trace its farther progress; suffice it to say, that it went on according to this beginning; and surely you have heard enough already, to enable you to make your own comparisons between the Christianity of Augustin and Ethelbert, and that of Cranmer and King Henry VIII., at least as far as concerns the means and the persons whereby it was introduced into this country.

THE
FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION
OF THE
BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.



NEW YORK:
EDWARD DUNIGAN AND BROTHER
151 FULTON-STREET, NEAR BROADWAY.

THE FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

THE feast which the Church celebrates to-day (the 15th of August) is the last, and in some respects the greatest, of all the yearly festivals in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, so that, in some countries, it is even called Lady-day, or *the* day of our Lady, as though it were undoubtedly her principal festival; and the reason of this is obvious, namely, because her Assumption into Heaven is the consummation of all the other great mysteries of her most wonderful life; it is the birth-day of her eternal glory, the final crowning of all those acts and virtues of her past life which we celebrate singly in her other festivals. We have already commemorated her Immaculate Conception, her Nativity, her Presentation in the Temple, her Espousals to St.

FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION OF

Joseph, her Annunciation by the blessed St. Gabriel, her Visitation of St. Elizabeth, her Purification forty days after the Birth of her Divine Son, and her Dolours, or most sacred *Compassion* with the Passion of our Lord; and now at length we are come to the last closing scene of the whole, her departure out of this world and entrance into the kingdom of Heaven.

There are two events, then, which are brought before our minds by this day's festival; first, the death of our blessed Lady, and secondly, her resurrection and assumption into glory. We propose to say a few words about each of these events separately.

And first, concerning her death. Death, as we all know, is a consequence and penalty of sin; it had been expressly denounced beforehand as the punishment of sin: "In what day soever thou shalt eat of it, thou shalt die the death" (Gen. ii. 17); and because our first parents disregarded this threat, and disobeyed the commandment of Almighty God, therefore "by one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death" (Rom. v. 12). But it is the doctrine of the Catholic Church that the Blessed Virgin Mary was, by the special grace of God,

preserved pure and spotless from every stain of sin, "not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and without blemish" (Eph. v. 27). Wherefore, then, did she suffer death?

We know, indeed, that her Son our Lord Jesus Christ, who, not by grace but by nature, was utterly "unspotted and undefiled" (1 St. Pet. i. 19), and "in whom there was no sin" (1 St. John iii. 5), yet suffered death, even the death of the cross; but this was necessary and for a special purpose, "that through death He might destroy him who had the empire of death, that is to say, the devil" (Heb. ii. 14). Our Blessed Lady could not do this; being herself a child of Adam, redeemed by the grace of God and through the merits of her own Son, she was not capable of redeeming others. Again, then, it may be asked, Wherefore did she suffer death?

One or two early Christian writers, moved perhaps by some such considerations as these, even expressed a doubt whether she really *had* died. They had never heard any certain account of her last hours and final decease; and they thought it not improbable that she had been exempted by some special privilege from

the common lot of men, and had been removed out of this world into the immediate presence of God, without passing through "the midst of the shadow of death."

It was *not* so, however; the Blessed Mother of God really died and suffered the separation of body and soul, even as her Son had died, and as all the children of Adam die. Jesus had entered into His glory through the gate of death, and Mary would not enter by any other way; she died that she might be more perfectly conformed to the image of her Son, that she might suffer what He had suffered—not, of course, for the same special purpose, and with the same blessed fruits—but still that she might be like Him. Neither, again, was her death altogether the same as the death of ordinary persons. Death did not come to her by the road of old age, disease, or bodily infirmity; for since, by God's grace, she had been preserved from original sin, and her pure flesh had never known defilement, she was saved also from disease and malady, and all that weakens and destroys the bodily frame. But death came to her upon the wings of love; the tie which bound her soul to her body was loosened by the burning aspirations of that in-

tense desire wherewith she thirsted for the presence of her God.

"As the hart panteth after the fountains of water," so her soul had panted for a reunion with her Son, or rather for a renewal of His visible presence which should never again be interrupted, from the very moment that He ascended up into Heaven. From that moment the language of the royal Psalmist had been hers: "O God, my God, for Thee my soul hath thirsted; for Thee my flesh, oh, how many ways!" (Ps. lxii. 2.) Nevertheless, for the great love that she bore to the disciples ransomed by the blood of her Son, and now her own adopted children, she consented to linger yet a while upon earth—an exile from the throne which stood prepared for her in Heaven—in order that she might be a nursing-mother to the infant Church. It is not known with any certainty how long she remained on earth after the Ascension of her Son; what is beyond dispute (for it is recorded in Holy Scripture), is this: that whilst Jesus yet hung upon the cross, He committed His Virgin Mother to the care of His virgin disciple, the beloved St. John; and that from that hour the disciple took her to his own home. And it is the gen-

erally received opinion among the most learned writers, that this inestimable privilege of the continual presence and companionship of the Mother of God was enjoyed by St. John for a period of twenty years (more or less) until the time of her death, when she is supposed to have been about seventy, or even seventy-two years of age.

We need not inquire whether or not St. John had gone to Ephesus before this event, or whether or not he had been accompanied thither by her who had been committed to his charge, and so they had both returned together to the city of Jerusalem; any how, it is the tradition of the Church, that when our blessed Lady received, by the message of an angel, the joyful intelligence that the hour of her dissolution was at hand, she was living in the holy city. Thither also were suddenly gathered together the Apostles from other parts of the world, either having been moved by some divine inspiration to undertake this journey at that time, or else having been actually brought thither by the ministry of angels, even as Habacuc was miraculously transported to Daniel in the lions' den (Dan. xiv. 35), or as Philip the deacon was miraculously removed from

the company of the Eunuch whom he had baptized, and was set down in Azotus (Acts viii. 39).

The Apostles then (and doubtless other Christians also) stood around the couch whereon the Blessed Virgin lay, and listened in tearful silence to the parting injunctions of their dear Mother. They wept; for how could they do otherwise, knowing as they did from the lips of Mary herself that she was about to be taken away from them? The dearest and most precious memorial of their risen and ascended Lord, she who had been their most faithful counsellor, their brightest example, and most constant consolation under all their trials and sufferings, was about to close her earthly pilgrimage, and to be received into the beatific presence; but that which was *her* gain would be *their* heavy loss: it was to lose Jesus, as it were, a second time. They wept, therefore, as dutiful and affectionate children must needs weep by the bedside of a dying parent. But Mary herself wept not; she awaited with calm and patient expectation, or rather with most earnest longings, the moment of her release. She addressed her sorrowing children with words of affectionate encouragement, commend-

ing to them the Church, the body of her Son, and assuring them of the continuance of her maternal love and watchful care and protection in Heaven, even as they had already experienced it upon earth. By and by, when she ceased to speak, the chamber was suddenly filled with a bright light, and with the sound of hymns and canticles sung by the heavenly host, who had come down to do honor to the Queen of Heaven, and to accompany her in her passage out of this world into the realms of eternal bliss and glory. Then the heavens were opened, and the Son of God Himself descended to receive the pure and stainless spirit of His Mother, which in that instant forsook the body, and was received into its appointed place in Heaven, being raised far above angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, and placed at the right hand of her divine Son.

Should these pages fall into the hands of any thoughtful Protestant, he may be disposed, perhaps, to make objection to the picture which we have drawn of the death of Mary, as being something too bright and glorious ever to have been the lot of a mere creature, a child of Adam like ourselves. But we would earnestly entreat

such a one to call to mind all that he has ever seen, or heard, or read, of the death-bed experiences of holy servants of God, either in this or in any earlier age of the Church, and then to ask himself whether it is not reasonable to expect that something still higher and more blessed than any thing which has happened to any of these, something altogether special and extraordinary, should have been the privilege of her who, alone of all human creatures that ever existed, was never separated from God; who was created and lived for Him alone; from whom He took His own human nature; in a word, who was *His Mother*? Can any man who really believes this stupendous fact, that Mary was the Mother of God, imagine for a single instant that there could have been any thing in her of those sins or infirmities which usually impart sadness or bitterness to the approach of death? Could there, for example, have been any lingering attachment to the things of earth, now about to be left behind? If of many saints it has been true that they have become totally detached from earthly things, how much more must this have been the case with the Queen of Saints! If they, by the grace of God, have been able to divest

themselves of the love of the creature, how much more must *she* have been free from any such affection who had been thought worthy to be chosen for the Mother of her Creator! It is written, "Where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also" (Matt. vi. 21); and Mary's treasure, He whom she had borne, and nursed, and watched and wept over, and adored for thirty years, had long since gone up into Heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. If saints could "count all things but as dung" that they might "gain Christ," how much less could any portion of *her* treasure be on earth, who had carried in her chaste womb the price of man's redemption! Neither, again, was it possible that troublous doubts and misgivings about the certainty of final salvation should find any place at the death-bed of the Mother of Jesus; for if it was given to the Apostle of the Gentiles, towards the close of his life, to exclaim with confidence, "I am ready to be sacrificed, and the time of my dissolution is at hand: I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: as to the rest, there is laid up for me a crown of justice, which the Lord the just judge will render to me in that day" (2 Tim. iv. 8),

how much more would not the same privilege belong to one whose union with God was unspeakably closer and more perfect than that of any apostle who ever lived !

Or, again, if the Church prays for every Christian soul as it leaves the body, that the bright company of the angels may come forth to meet it; that the triumphant and white-robed army of martyrs may draw near to welcome it; that the choir of virgins may receive it with exulting hymns; that Jesus may lift up the light of His countenance, mild and gracious, upon it; that the heavens may be opened to it, and that it may be received into the city of the heavenly Jerusalem; if all this, I say, is what we are taught to hope and pray for in the case of ordinary Christians departing out of this world, what may we not believe concerning the death of the Blessed Virgin, who was at once the Queen of angels and of saints, of virgins and apostles, yea, the very Queen of Heaven, and the Mother of our God ?

Yes, Mary's death must needs have been such as we have described it; not merely calm and peaceful, but even triumphant and glorious; and it has always been so celebrated by the Church from the very beginning, under the

various titles of the Sleep, or the Rest, or the Passage of our Blessed Lady. "Mary died; but her death was a mere fact, not an effect; and when it was over, it ceased to be. She died, that she might live; she died as a matter of form, or a ceremony (as I may call it), to fulfil what is called the debt of nature, not primarily for herself, or because of sin, but to submit herself to her condition, to glorify God, to do what her Son did; not, however, as her Son and Saviour, with any suffering, or for any special end; not with a martyr's death, for her martyrdom had been before it; not as an atonement, for man could not make it, and One had made it, and made it for all; but in order to finish her course, and to receive her crown."

Mary then was dead; and her sacred body—that body which had been not only the temple of the Holy Ghost, as the bodies of all Christians are, but the very tabernacle of God Incarnate—was borne by the Apostles to a sepulchre already prepared for it in the valley of Jehoshaphat. There it was buried with fitting rites and ceremonies, amidst the sobs and tears of the faithful who accompanied it to the tomb, and who crowded round with eager

reverence to take a last view of those features which they knew and loved so well, and which were now about to be removed from their sight forever. They were still bright and lovely as with the freshness of life and youth; there was no trace of age or suffering about them, no cold rigidity of death; but the lips seemed still to speak, and the face to smile, as though the body were not yet forsaken by the immortal spirit whose dwelling-place it had so lately been. Long and lovingly they gazed upon the beautiful corpse; but at length the gorgeous veil which had covered it during its procession from Jerusalem to the tomb was again placed over it; the stone with which the entrance to the sepulchre was to be closed, was securely fastened; and the faithful returned, silently and in tears, to their respective homes.

Yet a few still lingered behind,* unable to

* What follows need not be taken as literally and certainly true. We shall repeat what is the most accredited tradition of the Church; but our readers must remember, that all which is of *faith* with reference to this day's festival—that is, all which they are bound to believe under pain of sin—is this, that our Blessed Lady is no longer upon earth, but in Heaven. We celebrate her *Assumption* into Heaven; the Church has not defined whether that Assumption was “in the body, or out of the body.”

tear themselves away from the last resting-place of what was so dear to them, and fore-knowing probably, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the wonder that was about to be performed; these few kept watch around the tomb, both by day and night, until the third day; and during the whole of this time, an invisible company of angels were their companions, filling the air with the sweet harmony of their voices, singing and praising God. But on the third day this heavenly music ceased; and about the same time there arrived at Jerusalem an Apostle—the only one still living who had not been present at the Blessed Virgin's decease—who, as soon as he had heard of the loss which the Church had sustained, earnestly besought his brethren to indulge him with one last look at the countenance of the Mother of his Lord. Not unwillingly they yielded to his importunity; and a company of Apostles and disciples set forth with St. Thomas to go and open the tomb in the valley of Jehoshaphat. When they arrived there and heard that the angelic harmony had ceased, they knew full well what it was that had taken place. They knew that the body of their Mother, like that of her Divine Son, was no

longer where they had laid it, in the grave. Nevertheless, they persevered in their intention of opening the tomb, and found as they had anticipated. - Nothing was there ; nothing, that is, but the veil wherewith the body had been covered, and the flowers wherewith the holy women had carefully adorned the sepulchre when first it received its precious deposit. Moreover, fresh flowers of most exquisite color and fragrance had sprung up where the body had been laid ; the white lilies of virginal purity, and the blood-red rose of the martyr's charity ; but the body itself was gone. Jesus had come down from Heaven, attended by an innumerable company of angels and "of the Church of the first-born," and bringing with Him the blessed soul of His Virgin Mother. Then, in obedience to His divine word, this soul reunited itself to her sacred body, which, like His own, had not been suffered to see corruption ; and immediately the body arose, bright, glorious, and immortal, and passed at once to that exalted throne which Jesus had prepared for her at His own right hand in the highest heavens.

Such is the event, then, which the Church celebrates to-day under the title of the Assump-

tion of the Blessed Virgin Mary. "This day Mary the Virgin went up to Heaven; rejoice, for she reigneth with Christ forever;"—"she is taken up into Heaven, where the King of kings sitteth upon His starry throne;"—"the Holy Mother of God is exalted to heavenly kingdoms above choirs of angels;"—"the Queen standeth at the King's right hand in a vesture of gold;" this is the language which the Church has chosen wherewith to do honor to so great a festival; and although she has never defined this bodily Assumption of our Lady, so that it should be an article of the faith, like the Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord, yet what Christian is there whose heart does not recognize, when once he has reflected upon it, the beautiful fitness (if I may so speak) of this event in the life of our dear Lady, as the natural and almost necessary correlative of those events in the life of our Blessed Lord?

Protestants not unfrequently urge it as an objection against the Catholic Church, that she represents the life of our Lady as, in some sort, a counterpart of the life of our Lord. You celebrate, they say, the Nativity of Christ, and you celebrate also the Nativity of Mary; if

THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

Good-Friday is consecrated to the Passion of Christ, the Friday before it is consecrated to the *Compassion* of Mary ; and in like manner, if you keep holy the day of Christ's Ascension into Heaven, so also you keep holy another day in honor of the Assumption of Mary. This is what is often objected to us by Protestant controversialists, and we at once admit that it is so ; it is a necessary consequence of our belief that Mary was the Mother of Jesus ; we think that there is nothing unnatural or extraordinary in supposing the life of the Mother to have been like the life of the Son ; rather that it would have been strange and unnatural had it been otherwise. But Protestants should be careful to observe, that though we make the life of Mary *like* the life of Christ, we do *not* make it the *same*. The very names of the festivals which we keep sufficiently mark the distinction : thus, we are celebrating to-day the feast of the *Assumption* of our Blessed Lady ; but the festival in the life of our Lord which corresponds to this is called the feast of the *Ascension*. Now there is a difference between these two words, which accurately expresses also the difference between the two events. Our Lord *ascended*, or *went up*, into

Heaven, by His own power, by virtue of His divine omnipotence ; but our Blessed Lady *was assumed, or taken up* into Heaven, not by any inherent power of her own, but by the grace and favor of Almighty God. "Who is this that cometh up from the desert flowing with delights, *leaning upon her beloved?*" (Cant. viii. 5.) Jesus went up by virtue of that power which He had by nature as the Son of God ; Mary was taken up by the will and favor of her Almighty Son, conferring this privilege upon her whom He had chosen to be His Mother. The Ascension was an act of God, acting by and for Himself ; the Assumption was a special grace bestowed by Him upon the best and purest of His creatures.

Thus it is clear that we are as far as possible from identifying these two events, and representing them as really the same in their character and circumstances ; we only say that they correspond to one another, and that the one is as it were the natural and almost necessary correlative of the other. For consider : we believe that Jesus is ascended into Heaven, not in His divine nature only, but in His human nature also ; not with His soul only, but with His body also. The very same body which

was conceived in the Virgin's womb and nourished at her breast; which was nailed to the cross and laid in the tomb; that very same body is now ascended into Heaven, and sits there on the throne of God forever and ever. And can we believe that the flesh of Mary, of which that sacred body was formed, was allowed to moulder and rot in the grave, and to become the food of worms? Is there not something odious and revolting in the very idea? Surely it is most repugnant to every feeling of gratitude of which the human breast is capable, to think that the Son of Mary should so repay the debt He condescended to owe to His Mother, that He, whose commandment it is that children should honor their father and mother, and who promised that He would not fail to reward the gift of a cup of cold water to the meanest disciple, should suffer "the womb that bare Him and the breasts which He had sucked," the heart whence He had received His blood, the hands which had ministered to the wants of His helpless infancy, and the feet which had so assiduously waited upon Him during His whole life, to be dissolved into dust and ashes and to mingle with the clay of the earth. We are taught by Holy

Scripture itself, that it was not *possible* that the flesh of Christ should "see corruption" (Ps. xv. 10; Acts ii. 24); neither, therefore, was it fitting that the flesh of Mary, from which the flesh of Christ was taken, should suffer that degradation.

Observe, I am not putting forward this argument as being in any way the ground of our belief in the Assumption of our Lady; far from it; the real ground of our belief in that event is of course the traditional teaching of the Church; but I say that the consideration we have suggested is such as should oblige all Christians to acknowledge the reasonableness of this belief, even if they will not accept it as true; if they refuse to believe the fact of the Assumption themselves, at least they should abstain from bringing railing accusations against those who do believe it. For, as it has been well observed, "to sympathize with this fact, but two things are required: one is the belief that Mary is the Mother of God; and the other is a belief in the resurrection of the body. They who believe in the doctrine of the Incarnation—that is, who believe that Jesus is very God and very Man; God of the substance of His Father, begotten from all eternity; and

Man of the substance of His Mother, born eighteen hundred and fifty-two years ago in the stable of Bethlehem,—and who cannot therefore deny to Mary the dignity of Mother of God; and who also believe that article of the Creed which they often repeat, ‘the resurrection of the body;’ these persons are bound, we think, to concede at least this much, that our belief, that Mary’s resurrection has forestalled the great day, is a *most reasonable* belief. God is omnipotent; therefore He had assuredly the *power* to raise the body of His Mother. Mary is His Mother. Can we doubt, then, that He had the *will*?” Of course, from Catholics something more than this is expected; they should believe and rejoice in the memory of so glorious an event, as the Church year by year encourages them to do upon this day, and as all her faithful children have ever delighted in doing for the last fifteen hundred years; but even of those who are aliens to the true fold, as many as name the name of Christ, and “confess that He is come in the flesh,” should certainly acknowledge as much as this, that the Assumption of His Mother into Heaven, in body as well as in spirit, was at least a *probable* consequence of His own Ascension.

There is yet another fact also, which may not unfitly be urged upon the consideration of those Protestants who are scandalized by the teaching of the Catholic Church upon this subject; we mean, the fact which we read in Holy Scripture itself, that at the resurrection of our Lord "many bodies of the saints that had slept arose, and coming out of the tombs, came into the holy city, and appeared to many" (St. Matt. xxviii. 52, 53). Now, it has been always commonly believed, that the saints who were thus awakened from the sleep of death before the great and final day, were not restored to their friends upon earth merely that they might taste again of the bitterness of death, and again be consigned to the dark silence and to the corruption of the grave; but that they were suffered to retain the bodies which they had thus recovered, and with them were translated into Heaven to accompany the triumphal Ascension of their Lord. This, I say, has always been the common belief of Christians, and certainly it is a belief which commends itself as reasonable and true to every pious soul; and if this be so, the Assumption of our Blessed Lady may be said to become at once a matter of certainty. For those who believe the

resurrection and ascension of many, can have no difficulty in believing the resurrection and ascension of one, especially when that one is the Mother of Him who, in His sacred humanity, is now reigning in heaven. There are few persons who would not allow that it was only just and reasonable that Mary should surpass all other saints in privileges, as she did in holiness; "the very fact that certain privileges are known to be theirs, proves to us at once, from the necessity of the case, that she had the same, or higher." If, then, the general resurrection of all mankind in the end of the world was anticipated in the case of these "many saints," who "came out of the tombs and appeared to many" at the time of our Lord's Resurrection, may we not, or, rather, *must* we not believe, that the body of Mary too is not dissolved into dust and ashes, but has been raised long since "in glory and incorruption," "a spiritual body, having put on immortality," and is now "always with the Lord?"

If Protestants would think over these facts with that calm and serious attention which they deserve, they would no longer be scandalized at the doctrine of Catholics as to the

Assumption of the Mother of God, but would themselves acknowledge it as not only possible, but even in the highest degree probable. And this conviction of its probability should be still further strengthened by the consideration of this remarkable fact—remarkable, that is, supposing the Assumption to be what Protestants in general accuse it of being, “a fiction of the dark ages,” that among all the innumerable relics which have been preserved in the Catholic Church from the very earliest times, including relics of most of the Holy Apostles themselves, and of others of the same age, none whatever are anywhere supposed to exist of the body of the most Holy Virgin. Protestants indeed imagine that all these early relics are fictitious, and never really belonged to the persons whose relics they profess to be.

But this makes no difference to our present argument; or, rather, it makes our argument very much stronger; for if it was the habit of the ancient Christians, as Protestants would have us believe, to *pretend* to have relics which they did not really possess, whence comes it that they never pretended to have any of the Blessed Virgin Mary? It was as easy to say

THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

that a certain church contained the body, or a portion of the body, of the Blessed Virgin, as to say that it contained the head or the whole body of St. Peter or St. Paul, supposing that nothing was known or believed by Christians which would have at once convicted such an assertion as false ; and no Protestant can doubt but that it would have been far more profitable in every way to claim possession of a relic of the Holy Virgin than even of the Prince of the Apostles. Yet no such claim was ever made. Rome claimed to have the bodies of St. Peter and St. Paul ; Spain claims the body of St. James ; and other countries and churches make a similar claim for the bodies of the other Apostles, and of the early saints and martyrs ; but no church or country claims, or ever has claimed, to be possessed of the body of the Mother of God ; they may claim to have the veil wherewith her body was covered, or some other relic more or less intimately connected with her, but not one of them claims to possess her body. If the belief of the Catholic Church be true, that her body was reunited to her soul, and that they were together taken up into Heaven, this fact is at once accounted for ; but if otherwise, Protestants are bound to find some

other explanation, which shall be equally reasonable and satisfactory.

We have said thus much upon the arguments that might be urged, from reason and from history, in support of the Catholic belief of the Assumption of our Lady, for the sake of Protestants into whose hands these pages may fall, and who have either never thought of the subject at all, or have been taught to ridicule and scoff at the history as a mere superstitious fable. To Catholics, we well know, much of what we have said will have been needless; some portion, perhaps, may have almost sounded offensive, as though seeming to admit a doubt as to the credibility of this high and glorious privilege of our Blessed Mother, a privilege which the loving instinct of all true Catholics feels and knows to have been hers, almost as the necessary consummation of what she had before received. They feel that it could not possibly have been otherwise; that the honor of Almighty God absolutely required, as it were, this supreme exaltation of one standing in so near a relation to Himself; that that most wonderful miracle, whereby a creature became the Mother of her Creator, would have been in

a manner imperfect, had she not received that recompense of glory which is involved in the idea of her Assumption.

We believe that on the day when our Blessed Lady was taken up into Heaven, she was also crowned with the brightest diadem of glory, above all saints and angels, with the honor due to the Mother of God. "The king arose to meet her, and bowed to her, and sat down upon his throne; and a throne was set for the king's mother, and she sat on his right hand" (3 Kings ii. 19). This scene in the palace of the King of Israel is a faint type or shadow of what was to be seen in the eternal courts of Heaven, in the day when "the king's mother" entered into her glory. She was raised to the highest place above all created beings, and was crowned the Queen of Heaven and earth; all the choirs of angels, together with the rest of the glorious inhabitants of Heaven, rejoicing in her exaltation, and singing hymns of triumph in her honor. And we, who are members of the Church militant, and look forward to being admitted hereafter to the Church triumphant, must keep this festival by joining our homages with theirs. We must pour forth our souls before God in holy

transports of thanksgiving for the high degree of glory to which, in His infinite mercy, He has exalted the Virgin Mother of Jesus, and we must look upon it also with the eye of faith, as a kind of pledge and earnest of what may be in store for ourselves.

The day of Mary's Assumption is a day of triumph and exultation to her children, not only for *her* sake, because it is the day in which she was received to her everlasting reward, but also for their own; because it assures them that they too, if they remain faithful unto death, shall one day "receive a kingdom of glory and a crown of beauty at the hand of the Lord" (Wisdom v. 17). Our Redeemer Himself has said, that "in His Father's house are many mansions, and that He is gone to prepare a place for us;" therefore we continually pray that, through His merits, and through the powerful intercession of Mary, we may so faithfully copy her virtues into our lives, that finally we may attain the place prepared for us in His kingdom from the foundation of the world.

THE LITANY
OF
THE BLESSED VIRGIN,

COMMONLY CALLED

THE LITANY OF LORETTO.



NEW YORK:
EDWARD DUNIGAN AND BROTHER,
151 FULTON-STREET NEAR BROADWAY.

THE LITANY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

THE Litany of the Blessed Virgin is a form of prayer familiar and very dear to all Catholics, and one that seems always to recur with fresh and unexhausted beauty every time that it is used. Next to the *Our Father* and the *Hail Mary*, there is no form of prayer more common or more universally diffused over the wide empire of the Catholic Church. It may be found translated, from its Latin original, into every language spoken by the disciples of the Cross; it is sung by harmonious choirs in cities and places of great resort; it is recited at the foot of the simple altar in the village church by the rural population of ten thousand hamlets scattered over the Christian world.

Catholic families recite it when they meet

THE LITANY OF

together for morning or for evening prayers in their domestic oratories; and there are probably few, who practise their religion at all, who do not use it at least once every day in the course of their own private devotions. In a word, it is a form of prayer which is often on the lips of all devout Catholics, because it is so dear to their hearts.

In the great church of our Blessed Lady at Loretto in Italy—that church which incloses within itself the very chamber where the angel first saluted her as full of grace, and where the Word was made flesh—this Litany is sung every Saturday throughout the year, as well as on all her principal festivals and many other special occasions, with more than usual ceremony, such as the use of incense, and other tokens of reverence; and for this reason it is often called the Litany of Loretto.

The word Litany originally signified any prayer or supplication; but it has come, by use, to be exclusively applied to that particular form of it which consists in alternate invocation and response carried on by the priest and the people. The most perfect example of this form of prayer is that known as the Litany of the Saints, or the *greater* Litanies, as they are

called ; and these are publicly recited by the Church on certain solemn days, as, for instance, Holy Saturday and the Feast of St. Mark, and in the ministration of holy orders, and on other occasions, or they may be used privately at any time, according to the devotion of individuals. An examination of this beautiful Litany will show the alternate method of prayer which gives it its peculiar character, and which is so admirably devised for the purpose of increasing the fervor both of the pastor and of his flock, so that they may send up their petitions in one strong, earnest, united cry to the throne of the Lord of Hosts.

There are many other Litanies used extensively in private in various parts of the Church ; as, for instance, that of the Holy Name of Jesus ; of the Sacred Heart ; of the Blessed Sacrament ; of St. Joseph, and others. But of those which are properly called *public* Litanies, there are only two ; those of the Saints and of the Blessed Virgin, or of Loretto ; and it is the object of these pages to explain the meaning of this latter Litany, which is in such constant use amongst us, and so often made a subject of reproach against us.

First, then, I would observe that there is

THE LITANY OF

good reason for believing that this Litany may be traced back, at least in its rudiments, to the first ages of the Church: it is certainly very ancient, and has been used by all Catholics for a great number of centuries. It is called the Litany of our Blessed Lady, (1) because the prayers and invocations of which it is composed are offered to Almighty God through the powerful intercession of the Virgin Mother of His Divine Son; and (2) because they are so arranged as to do her honor by means of the various mystical figures which are applied to her, and the lofty names and titles of dignity by which she is invoked.

It is begun and concluded by a short verse or antiphon, expressive of the meaning and intention of the act which is about to follow: "We fly to thy patronage, O holy Mother of God; despise not our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us from all dangers, O ever-glorious and Blessed Virgin." Having thus humbly implored her aid and co-operation in recommending the desires and petitions of our hearts to the gracious notice of her Son and her God, we turn, through her, to the Supreme Majesty, whose bounteous favor has made her what she is; and we beseech His mercy, thrice

THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

calling in succession on the three Divine Persons of the ever-blessed Trinity: "Lord have mercy on us; Christ have mercy on us; Lord have mercy on us;" the last being addressed to the Holy and Eternal Spirit. The whole is a short declaration of our firm belief in the doctrine of their unity of being in three distinct persons. Then, with filial confidence, we beseech Christ Himself, the God-Man, the Word made flesh, the Son of Mary, to hear us; and again, graciously to hear and accept us; and this, because He is the great and supreme Mediator and Advocate with the Father, through whom, and for whose sake, the intercessions of the saints of God find grace and acceptance before him, according to the express promise of our Lord Himself: "In that day you shall ask in My name; and I say not to you that I will ask the Father for you, for the Father Himself loveth you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came out from God" (John xvi. 26, 27). To this succeeds a more formal invocation of the Holy Trinity, in its three Persons; and lastly in its mysterious Unity—"Holy Trinity, One God, have mercy on us."

Resting, then, on this firm and immovable basis of faith, and by it protected from all

THE LITANY OF

shadowy fears of transgressing the limits of what is due to God, and what is justly claimed from us by one whom He has honored above all His other works, we turn, with simple undoubting trust, to Mary; we name her name, *holy Mary*; and we ask her to *pray for us*. And this petition for her powerful intercession we repeat again and again forty-five times, each time addressing her by some new title of honor and dignity, as though we would encourage ourselves in our devotion by continually setting before our eyes either the claims we have upon her assistance, or else the grounds we have for feeling confidence in her power, or in her willingness, to help us; or lastly, from the mere overflowing of our hearts, because we would fain render the best homage that we may to her "whom the King hath a mind to honor."

In this long and glorious succession of titles we may observe a fourfold division, which will at any rate provide us with a convenient arrangement for the remarks which we propose to make upon them.

1. First, there is a class of titles especially referring to our Blessed Lady as the Mother of God, and which are, in fact, little more than an

THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

expansion of that one great and stupendous title which is at once the foundation and the full accomplishment of all the others. This is the root and origin of all the privileges which "holy Mary" enjoyed, itself the highest of them all, that she was the *Mother of God*; the mother of Him who had been foretold by the prophets as "Emmanuel, which being interpreted, is God with us" (Is. vii. 14; Matt. i. 23); of Him whom Peter confessed to be "Christ the Son of the living God," and whom we know to be Himself "over all, God blessed forever" (Rom. ix. 5). Rightly, then, do we first address our Blessed Lady by this highest and incommunicable title; and then we repeat it again under another form, reminding ourselves, as it were, how it is that such awful words could be truly spoken of any daughter of Eve, by calling upon her as *Mother of Christ*. She is the mother of God because she is the mother of Christ, who is God; and because she is the mother of Christ, therefore is she also *Mother of our Creator*; for Christ that was "born of the Virgin Mary" was "the same Word that was in the beginning with God: all things were made by Him, and without Him was made nothing that was made" (St. John i.

THE LITANY OF

3); and when this Word would take to Himself a human body and become man as well as God, He united the Blessed Virgin with Himself in His designs; He took His manhood from her pure substance, and made it forever one person with His divinity. She, then, is truly the mother of our Creator. She is also the *Mother of our Saviour*, because the pure and holy humanity which He had thus taken from her became the medium of man's redemption. He gave it without reserve, to suffer and to die, in order that we might live. The body which He took to Himself from the pure virginal womb of the "holy Mary" was the very same that hung and bled upon the cross; and by that blood was our redemption purchased. Most justly, then, do we enumerate this also among the high titles of our dear Lady, that she is the mother of our Saviour. And for this reason she is also the *Mother of Divine grace*, because she is the mother of Him "by whom grace and truth came" into the world (St. John i. 17), and because she herself too was "full of grace;" full of grace in herself, as the voice of the angel Gabriel proclaimed her to be even at the first, ere yet the Son of God was incarnate in her womb; and full of grace to others also,

THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

as she has ever since been acknowledged to be, the dispenser of divine grace, the channel through which Christ has willed that His grace should flow to all the members of His mystical body.

Then, again, we call upon her as *Mother most pure, most chaste, inviolate, and undefiled*; thus striking the same chord four times in succession, and repeating the same idea under various expressions, as though we could never weary of dwelling on the thought of our Mother's spotless purity. Spotless, indeed, must she needs have been, who was found worthy to be the tabernacle of God incarnate; she who, beyond all example and parallel in the history of mankind (as the preface of the Mass on her festivals expresses it), "by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit conceived the only-begotten Son of God; and, the glory of her virginity remaining, gave forth to the world the Eternal Light, Jesus Christ our Lord." Next we address her as *Mother most amiable*; and who, indeed, more amiable, more loving and more lovely, than she whom the infinite God enriched with such endless treasures of grace, and who, because she had so freely received, also freely gave? Who more amiable than she

whose heart burned with the love of God and of her neighbor; of God her Son, lying a helpless infant on her maternal bosom; of her neighbor, for whom that Son was about to suffer and to die? How amiable was this holy mother, we may see from what is recorded of her in holy Scripture: it was this which first drew her forth from her retirement, and bade her go with haste to visit her aged cousin St. Elizabeth; this too it was that caused her to intercede for her friends, and to plead with her Divine Son, for the performance of His first miracle at the marriage feast in Cana of Galilee; finally, it was this which supported her tender heart in the great offering which she made of her only Son for our sakes, that willing sacrifice which she first made when she presented Jesus in the Temple; which was renewed when He afterwards parted from her to begin His public mission, and was fully consummated when she stood by the cross on Mount Calvary. *Mother most admirable*; truly admirable indeed, even far beyond her of whom the holy Scriptures testify that she was "a mother, to be admired above measure, and worthy to be remembered by good men, who beheld her seven sons slain in the space of one

day, and bore it with a good courage for the hope that she had in God" (2 Machab. vii. 20). More admirable, I say, even than this saintly mother of seven saintly heroes was she, the Queen of Martyrs, whom we here address as mother most admirable, who

" At the Cross her station keeping,
 Stood the mournful mother weeping,
 Close to Jesus to the last."

2. Another class of titles attributed to our Blessed Lady in this Litany may be considered as summed up in its first example—*Holy Virgin of virgins*; Mary's second prerogative, inferior only to the first that made her the mother of God, is, that she is ever a virgin, and of all virgins the first. She is the *most prudent* of these holy spouses of the Lamb, because she excelled them all in laying up the words of her Son, and pondering them in her heart; and hence the Church does not hesitate to apply to her many of those passages of holy Scripture which speaks of this heavenly gift of prudence or wisdom. She is so wise and so prudent, that the very descriptions of wisdom as dictated by the Holy Spirit of God, and recorded in the sacred volume, seem literally to belong to her. And hence too we call her *most venerable*, for

THE LITANY OF

wisdom is ever venerable; and so is power, when united with goodness; and wisdom and power and goodness were all found together in the Blessed Virgin, each and all in the very highest degree in which they could possibly exist in any created being. Moreover, she is most venerable, because she gave the substance of her own pure flesh to be personally united to the Godhead; wherefore St. Elizabeth, who was the first of the children of Eve to pay her this veneration, does so with these words: "Whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" She is also *most powerful*; for what human power can equal hers whose word brought down Christ from heaven; to whom the Son of God was subject for thirty years; who prevailed with Him at Cana to work what might almost seem a premature act of His omnipotence; and whose prevailing prayers still achieve new and hourly triumphs of grace? She is also *most merciful*, as we have already seen; indeed she is the very mother of mercy; her virginal heart is gentle and full of pity; she learnt its perfection by suffering, and she has daily scope for its exercise towards her weak and perverse children. And then, lastly, she is *most faithful*. **Eve**

disbelieved the word of God which He spake to her in the garden of Paradise, and being deceived by the devil, involved the whole human race in one common ruin ; but Mary believed the word of God which He spoke to her by the mouth of the angel Gabriel, and so restored the whole human race to the hope of heaven. Mary was emphatically *the* woman who believed ; so that St. Elizabeth, speaking under the influence of the Holy Ghost, says to her, "Blessed art thou that hast believed" (St. Luke i. 45) ; thus singling out this one of her virtues, faith, for distinction, and calling her especially "her that has believed," as if, in comparison of her faith, the faith of none other deserved to be called such. Nor is this wonderful ; for consider what an act of faith was hers, when she believed what the angel Gabriel declared to her at the moment of the Annunciation ; and then look forward to Mount Calvary, where the Virgin Mother's place by the cross of her Son is a certain proof that this faith was still strong and unshaken within her, an undoubted pledge of her great fidelity to Him and to us for His sake. Moreover, for all these reasons she is also a Virgin *most renowned*. The angel had expressly declared that "all genera-

tions should call her blessed ;" and, as ages roll on, this prophecy has been ever fulfilled : the Blessed Virgin has ever enjoyed a dignity and a renown far above that of any other of the human race ; she has received the homage of the whole Church of God, as the Virgin of virgins, yet at the same time the mother of God.

3. A third series of titles in this beautiful Litany of our Lady is composed of mystical allusions to her high prerogatives, expressed, in several instances, in the language of Scripture. First, she is addressed as the *Mirror of Justice*, because it was from her, and through her, that the bright beam of the Sun of Justice first shone upon this world, "to enlighten them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to direct our feet into the way of peace" (Luke i. 79), and because justice and holiness were reflected from her pure and spotless soul, as from a polished mirror, without any stain or imperfection. "She is the brightness of eternal light, and the unspotted mirror of God's majesty, and the image of His goodness" (Wisdom vii. 26) ; she is also the *Seat of Wisdom* ; for in her the Eternal Wisdom of the Father made his throne. "He rested in her

tabernacle" (Ecclus. xxiv. 12); and upon her He poured forth all His most excellent gifts in superabundant measure. Next we hail her as the *Cause of our joy*, because she is the mother of Him whose birth was announced by the angels of heaven as "good tidings of great joy that shall be to all people;" so that it is through her, in truth, that we receive the joy of our everlasting salvation. By giving her consent to become the Mother of God, she co-operated in the redemption of mankind, so as to become as truly the cause of our joy, as Eve, by disobedience, was the cause of our sorrow. She is also, considered only in herself, and without any reference to what she has done for us, a *spiritual vessel, vessel of honor, vessel of singular devotion*; that is, she was an instrument perfectly fitted and prepared by the Almighty Hand for His most transcendent work; according to a similar expression of our Lord in regard to St. Paul (Acts ix. 15), "This man is to me a vessel of election;" that is, a chosen vessel, a vessel set apart for a special purpose. In this sense, holy Mary was a vessel specially chosen, set apart, and prepared to be the Mother of God: she was a "spiritual vessel," a vessel full of the Holy Spirit; "full of grace," full of

all spiritual gifts and graces, full even to overflowing; a "vessel of honor," made to contain that which is most precious and honorable, even the Son of God Himself, and worthy therefore to receive from us all honor that can lawfully be paid to any created being, the highest honor short of that which is due to God alone; lastly, a "vessel of singular devotion," making the most complete surrender of her heart and will to God from the first moment of her life, and offering to Him a more acceptable homage than the united honor paid to Him by all the saints and angels.

The next cluster of titles which follow in this class require for their right understanding a knowledge of other portions of holy Scripture, in which our Blessed Lady is spoken of, either figuratively or in direct prophecy. Thus, she is the *Mystical Rose*, "the rose-plant in Jericho" (Ecclus. xxiv. 18), pre-eminent above all others for the beauty and perfection of her virtues in the sight of God and man; an odor of sweetness before Him, fragrant as the rose among flowers. Beautiful as is the rose, it is yet a hardy plant, not reared delicately, but taking root in homely places, and thriving on simple culture; lifting up its head to cold skies

and stormy seasons. Mary's virtues were like it; they shone in lowly ways, and adorned an humble home; they smiled through many a storm, and shed their fragrance over many a rough way of this world before they were transplanted into the heavenly garden of the Lord. Then, again, the titles *Tower of David*, *Tower of ivory*, recall the language of the Canticles: "How beautiful art thou, my love; how beautiful art thou! thy neck is as the tower of David, which is built with bulwarks; a thousand bucklers hang upon it, all the armor of valiant men" (Cant. iv. 1, 4). And again, "Thy neck is as a tower of ivory" (Ib. vii. 4). The neck is the symbol of submission, of obedience, of endurance; it is upright, firm, strong, and immovable, like the tower of David, which he built on Mount Sion, for a bulwark and a defence of the city against invasion. God hath established Mary as the strong tower of His Church, its fair ornament and its defence. To her He has committed, and to her holy seed, the final victory over the enemy of our salvation, according to the most ancient of all prophecies, "I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; she shall crush thy head,

and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel" (Gen. iii. 15). In her does the Christian find an armor and a strong buckler of defence, against which all the powers of hell cannot prevail; and therefore does he call upon her in the language of the Church, *Da mihi virtutem contra hostes tuos*; "Give me strength against all thine enemies." And not only is our Blessed Lady strong and impregnable as the tower of David, but pure, moreover, and spotless as a tower of ivory; strength and beauty are blended into one in her. She is also a *House of Gold*, denoting in how precious a treasure-house of charity the Son of God was lodged when He lay in her sacred womb; so that, as the hymn of St. Ambrose expresses it, He did not "abhor the Virgin's womb." A "House of gold," because in itself most precious, "covered with charity for the daughters of Jerusalem" (Cant. iii. 10); and still more, because it inclosed Him "who is the chosen out of thousands, whose head is as the finest gold" (Cant. v. 10, 11). And as the ark of the covenant was overlaid, within and without, with the purest gold, because of the dignity of that which it was to contain, the tables of the law; so also it could not be that she, whose

spotless womb was to contain the Holy and Eternal God, the Author of that law, should herself be formed of a less precious material; the tabernacle in which the Son of God should dwell must needs be perfect; the most precious of earthly treasures; not merely overlaid with gold *without*, that it might have honor in the eyes of men, but *within* also, because the King of glory was to repose therein,—truly a “house of gold.” And thus we have explained also by anticipation why our Blessed Lady is invoked as the *Ark of the Covenant*; it has reference to this same indwelling of Christ in her pure womb; the ark, which Moses made by divine command under the ancient law, contained, as we have said, the tables of the law, as the great memorial of the covenant which God had then established with His people. In Mary there rested a better memorial than that of a broken covenant; in her holy womb there rested the “Mediator of a better testament, which is established on better promises” (Heb. viii. 6), so that she may rightly be called the Ark of this New Testament, the Ark of the Covenant. An explanation is thus afforded also of her next title of honor, *Gate of Heaven*. When our poor erring first parents had fallen

from their original innocence, and were unworthy any longer to reside in the fair pastures of paradise, God drove them forth into the wilderness of this world, and placed at the gate of paradise cherubim and a flaming sword, to be an impenetrable barrier against their return. It was not till the Son of God had become man of Mary's substance, and in His own person had overcome the sharp sting of death, that He opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. And as he came by and through Mary, with His Gospel of pardon and peace, and the promise of a return to paradise, therefore she is literally and truly the gate of heaven; for none can enter there but by her Son, and He came into the world through her. Further, she is the gate of heaven, because her assistance is all-powerful in procuring for us those gifts and graces which are necessary for us in order that we may be admitted into the kingdom of her Son, co-operating with us by her powerful intercession in surmounting the difficulties, dangers, and enemies that beset us in our path thither. Once more, Mary is as the *Morning Star*, heralding the approach of day; for from her He came forth who is the light of the world, "the

THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

true light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world ;" she is, as the Church elsewhere teaches us to call upon her, the

"Root of Jesse, Gate of Morn,
Whence the world's true light is born." .

She is the morning star, preceding the rising of that Son of Justice which is never again to set; through her "the orient from on high hath visited us" (Luke i. 78), and "light is sprung up to them that sat in the region of death" (Matt. iv. 16).

By the varied efficacy of her intercession and protection, she is the *Health of the Sick* in body and soul, of all who have recourse to her in their infirmities and ask for strength; the *Refuge of Sinners*, that is, of all those who seek to be delivered from their sins, who in their hearts renounce them and desire to abandon them, and are ready to do penance for them, and are in earnest in their determination to give them up, and so to escape from the anger of God; for it is of importance to observe, that no other sinners does the "holy Mary" harbor: those who love their sins, and will not abandon them, will find in her no protection, even as the cities of refuge under the old law (which

we may consider in this respect as a type of Mary) did not avail for the protection of the wilful and malicious sinner among the children of Israel. She is also the *Comforter of the Afflicted*, through the sympathy with sorrow that her own bitter anguish has taught her; the life-long wound which the sword of Simeon's prophecy inflicted on her holy and tender heart; and through the overflowing graces that pass through her, as through their appointed channel, from their fountain in God, to refresh and console the mourners. Lastly, she is invoked as the *Help of Christians*; a title which may be considered as a sort of summary of all those which immediately precede it, but which also deserves a distinct notice in itself, in consequence of the historical circumstances connected with it. It is a monument erected by a great and holy Pontiff of the Church, in gratitude for a signal instance of Mary's interposition in defence and in aid of Christians. Three hundred years ago, Christian Europe regarded with anxiety and alarm the rapid strides that were being made by the martial power of the false prophet Mahomet in the direction of western Christendom and of Rome itself. Constantinople had fallen before

it, and it had pushed its front as far as Greece. In the year 1571, the 7th of October, a great naval battle was impending in the Bay of Lepanto, between the Christian forces of Spain and Venice and the Mahometan Turks. It was expected to be a decisive engagement; and all eyes were turned to Mary, the mystical tower of David, for aid in repelling the advances of a power so hostile to the kingdom of her Son. Processions were seen, and solemn chants were heard, all over the Church, imploring her protection: in Rome, the great Confraternity of the Rosary was assembled in this way in the Dominican church of the Minerva. The holy Pope Pius V., now a saint of the Church, was sitting in his chamber, conversing with some of his cardinals; suddenly he paused, walked to the window, and seemed to be listening there for a while. Then returning to the company, he bade them join with him in giving thanks to God for the decisive victory that had just then been granted to the Christian arms. The scene of the battle was many hundred miles away; but it had been revealed to the holy Pontiff that at that instant the fleet of the Turks, though superior in strength, had been scattered, and their power

effectually weakened beyond the ability of recovery, even to this day. And it was in memory of this signal deliverance that St. Pius V. commanded this invocation to be added to the Litany, "Help of Christians, pray for us."

4. We come now to the fourth and last series of titles with which the Litany concludes; and which are, in fact, a short but comprehensive canticle of praise and glory to her whom we have been so long addressing. These titles carry our thoughts, not so much backwards to the history of what is past, nor yet to the origin, and foundation, and progress of her greatness, but rather up to the crown and consummation of all—her present glory in heaven, as she sits there on the right hand of her Son, the Queen of all things that derive their being from Him. He was Himself once subject to her, as the evangelist St. Luke expressly assures us. After that, it is no accession of honor that angels, and blessed spirits, and the heavenly choirs should bow down before her and revere her, "of whom according to the flesh Christ came, who is God over all, blessed forever." In perfect purity herself an *angel*; the desired of the ancient *patriarchs* and *prophets*, who longed to see the day of her Son, and were

glad to behold it afar off; herself a prophetess, in the inspired canticle of the *Magnificat*; associated with *Apostles* in the closing notice of her name in Scripture, among the faithful company that assembled in the upper room at Jerusalem; a *martyr*, and more than a martyr, so long and so deeply did she agonize with her Son; a *saint*, a *confessor*, and a *virgin* of more perfect stature and mould than any one in their innumerable ranks, they all yield to her the first and highest place among them, because to her Son, and in Him to her, they owe all that His grace has done for them. The triumphant hosts that stand in the presence of God at this hour, without change or end associate that Mother and Son in the throne of that kingdom which He purchased by His blood, and which she gave Him the means of purchasing, by giving Him a human body of her substance. That she is a Queen does not make Him less a King; He gave her all that she has, even the ability to give Him what He received from her. But since He gave her so much, as not to withhold even Himself from her, and His love and His obedience for thirty years; it must be that she reigns with Him now, because He reigns; it must be that she who was asso-

ciated with Him at every stage of the past, is still united with Him; it cannot be that the faith and hope of the Church on this point are ill-founded.

Queen conceived without original sin, is the closing invocation in most parts of the Church; an acknowledgment of what has been, implicitly at least, in the mind of the Church from the beginning, that Mary was herself conceived without original sin, by an anticipation in her behalf of the usual and ordinary effects of grace on the children of divine adoption by the Sacraments. But of this we must find another opportunity to speak more at length.

Then the Litany concludes with a thrice-spoken appeal to the mercy and goodness of the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world; the Son of Mary, who clothed Him in the body that redeemed the world.

Let every Catholic, then, bear witness whether this explanation of the Litany of the Blessed Virgin be not the words of truth and soberness; whether Scripture and reason are not on our side; whether it can be otherwise than as the Church teaches us to believe. And if it is indeed so, what energy of language can truly

set forth our high and blessed privilege? Did we know that in a certain place in this country there lived a person in the enjoyment of the supreme confidence of our earthly sovereign, and who was accessible to all, refused none whatever was asked, and was refused nothing; would not the doors of that place of influence and successful quest be besieged, night and day, by applications and petitions, and loud grateful thanks? Behold here a greater than any earthly confidant of majesty; behold an influence, compared with which the united majesty of the whole world is weak and incapable. Mary is the Mother of the King of kings; she is a Queen, and she is our Mother. She is at home, night and day, to our petitions; we have liberty of access to her any moment; whatever we ask will be granted, or its equivalent; something that is better even than we desire. All that she undertakes to do, she carries through triumphantly; she has undertaken to crush the enemy of God, and she will do it; God calling her to it, and providing her for it. She once brought Him from heaven, as His priest does to-day, by a word of her lips; since then she has only to speak, and what she speaks is done.

Why, then, should this stupendous power lie idle in our regard, for want of energy or want of faith? Why should we want any thing necessary for our salvation, with such a medium of grace at our very door? Where we sit, or stand, or walk, we can reach her throne in an instant; our half-expressed desire can speed faster than the lightning, and an answer of peace return into our souls. Are we sorrowful? she will cheer us. Are we faint and dispirited? she can revive us. Are we oppressed by our sins? she will afford us a refuge at the foot of the Cross of her Son. If we choose to ask her, she will undertake to bring us safely through the trials and dangers of this life, to make a way for us through, and over, all to eternal glory. Let us, then, cast away from us all suspicion, and the chilling neglect in which too many, even children of the Church, live in regard to her; it is hardly less dishonoring to her and to her Son, than open enmity, and denial of her power. Let us act as if we really believed what with our lips we pronounce, when we recite her Litany. And God give us grace so to use the great gift of her intercession and protection for His greater glory and our own final salvation.

LITANY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

Sub tuum præsidium confugimus, sancta Dei Genitrix; nostras deprecationes ne despicias in necessitatibus nostris; sed a periculis cunctis libera nos semper, Virgo gloriosa et benedicta.

Kyrie eleison.

Kyrie eleison.

Christe eleison.

Christe eleison.

Kyrie eleison.

Kyrie eleison.

Christe audi nos.

Christe exaudi nos.

Pater de cœlis Deus,

Fili Redemptor mundi

Deus,

Spiritus Sancte Deus,

Sancta Trinitas, unus

Deus,

Sancta Maria,

Sancta Dei Genitrix,

Sancta Virgo virginum,

Mater Christi,

Mater divinæ gratiæ,

Mater purissima,

Mater castissima,

Mater inviolata,

Mater intemerata,

Mater amabilia,

Mater admirabilia,

Mater Creatoria,

We fly to thy patronage, O holy Mother of God; despise not our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us always from all dangers, O glorious and blessed Virgin.

Lord have mercy.

Lord have mercy.

Christ have mercy

Christ have mercy.

Lord have mercy.

Lord have mercy.

Christ hear us.

Christ graciously hear us.

God the Father of
heaven,

God the Son, Redeemer
of the world,

God the Holy Ghost,
Holy Trinity, one God,

Holy Mary,

Holy Mother of God,

Holy Virgin of virgins,

Mother of Christ,

Mother of divine grace,

Mother most pure,

Mother most chaste,

Mother inviolate,

Mother undefiled,

Mother most amiable,

Mother most admirable,

Mother of our Creator,

Misere nobis.

Ora pro nobis.

Have mercy on us.

Pray for us.

THE LITANY OF

Mater Salvatoris,
Virgo prudentissima,
Virgo veneranda,
Virgo prædicanda;
Virgo potens,
Virgo clemens,
Virgo fidelis,
Speculum justitiæ,
Sedes sapientiæ,
Causa nostræ lætitiæ,
Vas spirituale,
Vas honorabile,
Vas insigne devotionis,
Rosa mystica,
Turris Davidica,
Turris eburnea,
Domus aurea,
Fœderis arca,
Janua Cœli,
Stella matutina;
Salus infirmorum,
Refugium peccatorum,
Consolatrix afflictorum,
Auxilium Christianorum,
Regina Angelorum,
Regina Patriarcharum,
Regina Prophetarum,
Regina Apostolorum,
Regina Martyrum,
Regina Confessorum,
Regina Virginum,
Regina Sanctorum omnium,
Regina sine labe originali con-
cepta,
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata
mundi,
Parce nobis, Domine.
Agnus Dei, &c. Exaudi nos,
Domine.
Agnus Dei, &c. Miserere no-
bis.
Christe audi nos.
Christe exaudi nos.

Oratio nobis.

Mother of our Saviour,
Virgin most prudent,
Virgin most venerable,
Virgin most renowned,
Virgin most powerful,
Virgin most merciful,
Virgin most faithful,
Mirror of justice,
Seat of wisdom,
Cause of our joy,
Spiritual vessel,
Vessel of honor,
Singular vessel of devotion,
Mystical Rose,
Tower of David,
Tower of ivory,
House of gold,
Ark of the covenant,
Gate of heaven,
Morning star,
Health of the sick,
Refuge of sinners,
Comforter of the afflicted,
Help of Christians,
Queen of Angels,
Queen of Patriarchs,
Queen of Prophets,
Queen of Apostles,
Queen of Martyrs,
Queen of Confessors,
Queen of Virgins,
Queen of all Saints,
Queen conceived without ori-
ginal sin,
Lamb of God, who takest
away the sins of the world,
Spare us, O Lord.
Lamb of God, &c. Gracious-
ly hear us, O Lord.
Lamb of God, &c. Have
mercy on us.
Christ hear us.
Christ graciously hear us.

Pray for us.

THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

Ant. Sub tuum præsidium confugimus, sancta Dei Genitrix; nostras deprecationes ne despicias in necessitatibus nostris; sed a periculis cunctis libera nos semper, Virgo gloriosa et benedicta.

V. Ora pro nobis, sancta Dei Genitrix.

R. Ut digni efficiamur promissionibus Christi.

Oremus.

Gratiam tuam, quæsumus, Domine, mentibus nostris infunde: ut qui, Angelo nuntiante, Christi Filii tui Incarnationem cognovimus, per Passionem ✠ ejus et Crucem ad Resurrectionis gloriam perducamur. Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum.

R. Amen.

V. Divinum auxilium moneat semper nobiscum.

R. Amen.

Ant. We fly to thy patronage, O holy Mother of God; despise not our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us always from all dangers, O glorious and blessed Virgin.

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray.

Pour forth, we beseech thee, O Lord, thy grace into our hearts; that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ thy Son was made known by the message of an Angel, may, by his Passion ✠ and Cross, be brought to the glory of his resurrection. Through the same Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

V. May the divine assistance remain always with us.

R. Amen.

THE
ROSARY OF THE BLESSED
VIRGIN MARY;

OR, THE
USE OF THE BEADS NO "VAIN REPETITION."



NEW YORK:
EDWARD DUNIGAN AND BROTHER,
FULTON-ST. NEAR BROADWAY.

THE

ROSARY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

WHEN a Protestant stands for the first time in a Catholic church, one can suppose how many things there must be to excite his wonder. He is at no loss what to think of the public ceremonial before him : the candles and the incense, the splendid dresses, and repeated genuflections of the priest, have all from childhood been stamped on his mind as the mummeries of a lifeless superstition. These ceremonies, which please and amuse the eye, he may think, are the things which tempt Catholics to forget how little real benefit to the soul is derived from an outward form. Yet this is not all which is new and strange to him : there is much in the manner of the people themselves which cannot fail to strike him, in their attachment to this empty ceremonial

worship, and the extreme devotion they exhibit in practices, to him the most unmeaning of all.

For instance, if he looks through the kneeling congregation, he will probably see in many hands a little string of beads, which he knows is called a Rosary; and remembering to have heard that Catholics are accustomed to say certain very short prayers over and over again, as they touch each of these beads, he may repeat to himself the warning against vain repetitions, and class the Rosary among the unscriptural corruptions of Rome.

Yet it is surely strange that "vain repetitions" are in general so devoutly said. It may be readily seen in Protestant churches how little power the English Liturgy has to keep alive a wandering attention, even though said in our own native tongue, and with all the additional impressiveness of tone and manner. These prayers, we are told, are precious to those who would worship, not with the lips only, but in spirit and in truth. And yet they are listened to without response by congregations who forget to kneel, and find time to be tired with a service, which they tell us is so impressive and so dear to them. It is, we re-

BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

peat, strange that a spiritual worship should be attended to so carelessly, while all the marks of a deep and true devotion are to be found with those who utter an unmeaning form.

But is the Rosary such? This is what we are now going to consider. Before we condemn a devotion so dear to many of God's saints, and they not common ignorant people who could not read, and so might be glad of a method of praying without a book, but many of them very learned men, it may be well to know a little more about it.

Now, I suppose the idea which a Protestant generally attaches to "telling the beads," as it is called, is simply this: that there are a certain number of Latin prayers to be repeated over and over again as rapidly as one can count them off, without any particular intention in saying them, the prayers themselves being destitute of any real devotion, and mostly addressed to the Blessed Virgin. In short, he thinks it a mere exercise of the lips, in which we think "to be heard for our much speaking," but one in which it is wholly impossible that the heart can ever join. This, like most mistaken opinions, has in it a mixture of truth. The prayers are, for the most part, addressed

THE ROSARY OF THE

to our Lady, and very frequently repeated, and the number of them is indicated by the number of the beads; and if the mere formal repetition of ten, twenty, or fifty of these prayers, made up the devotion of the Rosary, Protestants might have some excuse for calling it an unprofitable exercise.

But that this is very far from being the case, I think I shall be able to show you. The mere utterance of certain prayers constitutes but a small part of the use of the beads. It is by no means an easy thing to say the Rosary well; but we may safely affirm, that any one who *can* do so has little more to learn in the science of devotion.

Now as to the prayers of which it is composed, they are, as perhaps you already know, a certain number of "Our Fathers" and "Hail Marys," which are said by us to obtain blessings from God through the intercession of our Lady, and in honor of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. But besides these prayers, we are given fifteen meditations; that is to say, fifteen subjects which we are directed to think about and make real to our minds; and whilst so meditating on each subject, we have to say one "Our Father," ten "Hail Marys," and

one "Glory be to the Father," &c. These meditations are called Mysteries: they are mostly taken from the history of our Lord's life, passion, and resurrection, and are themselves divided into three distinct parts. The Church, in contemplating these different mysteries, delights to do so by associating herself in sympathy with her who loved our Lord best, and was nearest to Him, His blessed Mother. The first five are called the "*joyful* mysteries," because they refer exclusively to that season so joyful to Mary, and to the Church with her, when God was born into the world as a little child, and spent His divine infancy among men. They consist of the *Annunciation*, when the angel Gabriel first brought the glad tidings to Mary that she was to be the Mother of God; the *Visitation*, when she went to see her cousin, St. Elizabeth, and sung her song of rejoicing as she beheld the first fruits of the Incarnation in the sanctification of St. John Baptist in his mother's womb; the *Nativity* of our Lord in the stable at Bethlehem; His *Presentation* in the Temple; and *His being found* at Jerusalem, after having been lost three days by his sorrowing parents.

The next five mysteries are called *sorrowful*,

THE ROSARY OF THE

because they contain the awful history of the Passion. The first is the *prayer and agony of Jesus* in the garden, when His sweat "became as drops of blood trickling down upon the ground." His *scourging* at the pillar; His *crowning with thorns*; His *carrying the cross*, all weary and faint with loss of blood; and lastly His *crucifixion* and death.

The last five are designated *glorious mysteries*. They begin with His *resurrection* from the grave; His *ascension* into heaven; the *descent of the Holy Ghost* on the disciples on the day of Pentecost; the *assumption of the Blessed Virgin*, by which we mean how, after her death, her divine Son received her to Himself, to be always with Him in the bosom of His glory; and her *crowning in heaven*, in which we commemorate the dignity which is conferred by our risen Lord on all His Saints in His eternal kingdom, but chiefly, and above all, on her who is first of all creatures, His own dear Virgin Mother.

You see, therefore, that if we repeat the entire Rosary, meditating on each of the fifteen mysteries, and saying the appointed number of prayers to each, we should say the "Our Father" fifteen times, and the "Hail Mary"

BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

one hundred and fifty. But this is seldom done, except in monasteries and convents, where persons have more time for devotional exercises; the common practice for those who have worldly occupations to attend to, is to select one of the three divisions of the Rosary for each day, either the joyful, sorrowful, or glorious mysteries. In this manner we repeat only five "Our Fathers" and fifty "Hail Marys;" but I dare say you think even this would be a very wearisome repetition of the same words. It seems so to Protestants, because they imagine Catholics are content to utter them without any particular intention, and because they do not see in what manner they can be made to refer either to these mysteries of which I have spoken, or to the wants and feelings of the person who is saying them. Indeed, in general, Protestants are not even aware that meditation on the mysteries forms any part of the devotion of the Rosary; it is to them nothing but an empty form of words.

There are, therefore, several things which have to be explained, before any one can have a right notion of the real nature of this devotion. And first, I wish to try and show you how the prayers themselves, which seem to

you to contain so little meaning, may be made to express whatever you desire; it will not then be difficult to explain the manner in which these prayers, and your own feelings too, may all be connected with the particular mystery which is the subject of meditation at the time.

You know there is more than one way of praying. If we choose, we can take a book of devotion, and selecting any prayer in it we like, we can repeat it line by line, and so try and make other men's words express our own feelings. The Catholic Church is certainly very far from forbidding this kind of prayer; on the contrary, the very best books of devotion that exist are those which have been drawn up for the use of her children. Some of them even Protestants are glad to use. But the defect of this method of devotion is, that in saying words composed by others, we must ask exactly for what they express, and sometimes they will not quite express our own feelings. Sometimes, perhaps, we are ashamed to utter words of absorbing self-abasement, when we are conscious that our own sense of contrition is less deep; or, it may be, the words before us are all full of joyful love, and we

BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

would only be lying at the foot of the cross, crushed and humbled under the intolerable sense of sin.

Then, again, our wants are so various, one could not find prayers to meet them all. Sometimes they are very distinct, growing out of the cares of to-day—the little things which belong to our own life, but which may seem unimportant to other people—difficulties and temptations which may not occur to other minds, but are very grave and real to us. Sometimes, again, they are not so clear and definite. There are feelings which others cannot understand, and which perhaps we do not well understand ourselves. Nothing, it may be, but a weariness and the sense of great need. It is not that we have this or that to ask for in particular, but we feel weak and fearful and unhappy; we desire only to kneel down in God's presence and let Him see our hearts, and then the best-chosen phrases of other men seem stiff and empty. We do not seek for words, or, if any are needed, let them be such as will mould themselves to the fashion of our own unutterable thoughts.

Surely all must know what I mean, that there is often a consciousness of sin impossible

to confess, and a sense of prayer impossible to put into any set form of words: we may try to use our own, chosen at the moment; if so, how difficult it is to select those that are right and good! Sometimes we say the same thing over and over again—sometimes, try as hard as we may, what we say does not express our meaning; it vexes us that our words should be so vague and indistinct, and we puzzle ourselves to find better; and so, in thinking for right expressions, we lose time, and our thoughts get distracted.

And yet, at such times, it is seldom safe to let our thoughts wander on unrestrained by any form at all: we want, as it were, an *outline* of prayer, which we may fill up with the requirements of the hour; we want something to check and remind us that we are not thinking to ourselves, but to God.

This is what the Rosary supplies. It gives sufficient of an outward form of devotion to keep our thoughts in order, and, at the same time, the prayers of which it is made up are just of that nature which we can adapt to suit our own meaning and intention as we utter them. Just think how different the Lord's Prayer is from any of human composition. It

asks for definite blessings, yet it will bear all meanings. Like the miraculous bread, which, in our Lord's hands, grew to feed the wants of thousands, whatever may be our wants, there is enough, and more than enough for all. We ask for forgiveness,—it may mean forgiveness of that sin which at the moment is most heavy on our conscience. We pray against evil and temptation,—and all our trials, the least as well as the greatest, we may, in thought, include in the words we are saying. And as we pray for the coming of His kingdom, it may be we are thinking of the storms and perils of the Church, which is Christ's kingdom upon earth; or, tired of ourselves, and athirst, like David, after the living God, we may be praying for the rest and blessedness of His eternal kingdom in heaven.

Thus these words, which are so plain and simple and easy to be remembered, that they are the first we teach our children, are full enough for the lips of the wisest of God's Saints. We may say them, as of old they used to be said, every hour, and every hour with a larger meaning, as the days and hours of man's life give him fresh desires, and more to ask of God.

THE ROSARY OF THE

So, again, with the repetition of the Hail Mary. It is composed of these few words: "Hail Mary! full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death."

Now, at first sight, there seems very little prayer at all in this. The first part is made up of the words addressed to the Blessed Virgin by the Angel Gabriel, to which is added the salutation of St. Elizabeth, and the Holy Name of Jesus. The second has only the simple words, "pray for us;" yet, do you not see that into these words also we may put the feelings with which our hearts are fullest at the moment? There is nothing we cannot ask our Lady to obtain for us from God by means of her prayers, when we ask her to "pray for us:" the words may be the same over and over again, yet each time we say them our *intention* may vary, and so the prayer be different. And though the first part is not strictly a *prayer*, if by prayer is always meant a direct petition, yet it is a very fitting, and certainly a Scriptural form, (for the words are all from the Bible,) in which to express our thankful-

ness to God for His mercy to us, in that particular mystery of the Incarnation on which we are meditating.

Let me try and explain to you a little more exactly what a Catholic endeavors to do when he repeats the Rosary.

He kneels down, first making the sign of the cross, and asking God's blessing on what he is about to do, with the words: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The strings of beads he holds in his hand is simply to assist his memory, and prevent him from losing his place and getting confused in the repetition of the same words so many times. His great object is to keep his mind constantly fixed upon the subject before him; therefore he is very glad of any thing that prevents distraction, and tells him when the proper number of prayers has been said, without his having to count them, and think whether there is not one more yet to say, which would in a moment take his thoughts off from the presence of God. The touch of the beads, without disturbing him, reminds him of the proper time to change the form of prayer, and when he is to pass from one point of meditation to another. In all

this it is the object of the Church to assign some fixed limits to our meditations, though she allows us ample freedom within them: we need discipline in prayer quite as much as in any thing else. Well, having thus prepared himself for devotion by a recollection of the presence of God, he sets before his mind the intention for which he is going to pray—we will suppose it is to obtain grace of humility—and then he takes one of the fifteen mysteries to meditate on; say, for instance, the first in the whole Rosary, the Annunciation. He tries, as it were, to draw a picture of this in his mind's eye. He paints to himself a little room where Mary is alone praying, and watches her in silence, thinking of her in her purity and lowliness, the graces which best fit us to receive great and extraordinary blessings from God.

Suddenly there steals through the open casement a ray of soft glorious light; it shines round her brighter and brighter, and she raises her head, and turns round, and sees standing in the midst the beautiful form of one of God's angels; and his voice is heard speaking to her, and bringing her the glad tidings that she is to be the Mother of God. Surely such a scene, if

we saw it in reality, would give us very much to think about. It would make us wish for the same graces which made Mary so pleasing to God; it would make us love and honor her for being found worthy of so great a gift; and above all, it would make us love and honor God for sending us so gracious a message through her, and consenting that His dear Son should take mortal flesh, that He might suffer and die in it for our redemption. And whilst this beautiful picture is in his soul, and the thoughts that it gives rise to are following one on another without any labor or effort, he begins by saying the Lord's Prayer, and then repeats the words of the "Hail Mary" ten times; and perhaps he repeats it with this sort of thought in his heart, "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us, that we may be humble, as thou wert; pray for us, that we may be pure in heart, as thou wert; pray for us, that we may always consent to the will of God like thee; pray for us, that the Word which was made flesh and dwelt in thee, may so dwell in us that we may never be parted from Him." I do not mean that we need *say* these or any other like words, though indeed there is nothing to forbid our so enlarging even the

words of the prayers; but I mean that the "Hail Mary" may take this or any other sense we like to put upon it, and may be made to bear reference to the mystery which is pictured in our souls.

Finally, when the touch of a larger bead gently reminds him that it is the proper time, he repeats reverently the words, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost," &c.; and in so doing he renders homage to the Three Persons of the ever-blessed Trinity for what They have done for us: to the Father, for sending us His beloved Son; to the Son, for consenting to become man for our sakes; and to the Holy Ghost, for His gracious overshadowing of the Blessed Virgin; to each Divine Person for the part each took in the work of Redemption, and to God in all. And so, in like manner, he may go through the other mysteries in order.

But perhaps you find something that shocks you in the fact of the "Hail Mary" being repeated so much oftener than the Lord's Prayer; and it may be you think that there is in this a fresh instance of that unhappy creature-worship which disfigures every part of the Catholic religion. Now do not suppose

that the reason of this is, that we consider prayers addressed to the Blessed Virgin better than prayers addressed to God. We do certainly think her prayers for us are better, and more likely to be heard and answered than our own; because we know that she was ever perfectly free from all stain of guilt, and is now nearest to God in glory, and we feel ourselves full of the defilement of sin. Therefore we do very often ask her to pray for us, and we always feel a great confidence in doing so; knowing she will only ask for what is good for us, and believing that God cannot refuse to grant the prayer of His own dear Mother. But the chief reason of the "Hail Mary" occurring so much more frequently in the Rosary than the Lord's Prayer is, that the whole of it may be considered a devotion to our Lord's Incarnation; and the words of this prayer bear a more direct and continual reference to this great Christian mystery than those of the Lord's Prayer. We call Mary "full of grace," because she was replenished therewith above all creatures to fit her to be the Mother of God; we call her "blessed among women," because she is the Mother of Jesus; we call Jesus, "the fruit of her womb," blessed, be-

cause He is our Lord and our God. It is in the same spirit that Catholics love to look at pictures which represent Jesus as a little child in His Mother's arms. Do you think it is because in such pictures the Blessed Virgin appears as the principal figure, and that they love the Mother better than the Child? Ah, no; they do love her very dearly, but only for the sake of her Divine Son. They love the picture which shows Him as an infant, because it so forcibly reminds them how good, and gracious, and full of love He was, when He, the great God, "by Whom all things were made, and without Whom nothing was made that was made," came down from heaven, and became weak, and mute, and helpless, and all for the love of us.

It is this one thought, "God made man," which the "Hail Marys" always brings before us. Persons may repeat the Lord's Prayer without any special remembrance of the Incarnation: but it would be impossible to say the "Hail Mary" without recollecting it: the very words contain its history. You therefore see why it is more suited to this particular devotion; and that in no sense is it because we consider an address to a creature better than a

prayer to God. I said, that these prayers, and the meditations also, may be adapted to our own wants for the time being, in a way in which perhaps written words could never be. It would be difficult to show you exactly how this can be done: one cannot judge of another's inmost thoughts. But suppose you desire to pray for those you love, and who are suffering either in mind or body. Will not the thought of the first sorrowful mystery, *the agony of Jesus in the garden*, when His "soul was sorrowful even unto death," (Matt. xxvi. 38,) make you confident in commending *their* wants to Him who knew so well all kinds of pain and suffering? The depths of His agony no human heart will ever know; and perhaps the griefs even of our best friends are in great part hidden from us; but if so, there is a deep comfort in associating the thought of them with the remembrance of the unknown sufferings of our Lord, and giving them up to Him and to His Mother to be cared for. Then, perhaps, as we say the ten Hail Marys, it is as if we were saying: "Pray for us, that God's Angel may come from heaven and strengthen them; pray for us, that we may not grow tired of watching with them, and caring for their troubles, like the weary disciples;

pray for us that, like Jesus, whatever falls out, we may say, 'Thy will, not mine, be done.'” In this way, the words of the prayer and the mysteries of the Rosary are connected with our own anxieties; and out of them we make for ourselves a form of petition to God, which probably suits us better than any thing we might chance to find printed in a book.

Or, to take another kind of trouble, one which many good persons find their principal hindrance and torment,—I mean distractions, or what is called dryness in prayer; that is, a certain sort of feeling, as if we had no comfort in good thoughts; as if we were tired of religion, and were out of God's favor. This often happens to us; and whilst the feeling lasts, we seem to ourselves very wicked, though we are not conscious of any particular sin which depresses us; there is only a general indefinite sense of being shut out of God's presence, and left quite to ourselves.

In such a case very long prayers would be sure to weary; we should not be able to keep our thoughts from wandering, if we were to try and follow the words of the most excellent written forms. But the Rosary seems to supply a kind of devotion which would be full of

BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

comfort to any one so suffering. Let him take the fifth joyful mystery, *the finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple*, after having been lost for three days by His parents; and let him think a little about the history of it, before trying to say any prayers at all. For twelve happy years Mary and Joseph had had our Lord always with them; night and day He had been close to them, and we can hardly imagine the joy and comfort His presence must have been. Now they have lost Him, and the loss is agonizing. They look everywhere in vain; the world is a blank, for Jesus is not with them; every thing is empty and desolate; every thing they behold serves but to increase their sorrow. Is not this much as we are feeling—*without Jesus*? The heart which yesterday was full of Him, now sad and sorrowful, and with nothing to denote His blessed presence. At last they find Him, and they find Him in the Temple. We can understand their three days' grief, and something of their joy when it was over; and perhaps we feel that it is in the Church, that is, either in prayer or in the Sacraments, that we had best try to get back our lost Lord into our souls. Then the little words, "Pray for us," mean, "Pray, that, like thee, we may find

Jesus, whom we seem, like thee, to have lost. But lately He seemed to be with us, and we could think of Him and pray to Him without any difficulty; but for these last three days all our thoughts are confused; we feel unhappy and desolate. Pray for us, O dear Mother! that, like thee, we may find Him again, and that our sinfulness and coldness may not drive Him away from us for ever!"

Ah! I cannot tell you all that the Rosary may be made to say. I cannot go through all your troubles, and show how there is always some part of the history of Jesus Christ, the thought of which will comfort you. I cannot number all your wants, nor show you how to pray for each. I cannot count the mercies of God, nor reckon up how often we may give Him praise, and for His sake learn to call His Mother "Blessed." But let us go back to the Catholic chapel in which I imagined we were standing. You see one of these ignorant and superstitious worshippers;—so they seem to you. His beads are passing rapidly through his fingers, and he is muttering the while what are to you unprofitable repetitions. Do you know what he is really doing? Perhaps, with his eyes half closed and his lips almost uncon-

sciously moving, he may be in thought worshipping in the stable at Bethlehem, and the Divine Infant and His Blessed Mother may be before the eyes of his soul,—with St. Joseph, and the shepherds, and himself kneeling in the midst. And so feeling how good and joyful a thing it was for our Lord to be born into the world that night, there is much meaning in his repetition of the words, “Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.”

Or, it may be, a more awful picture is before him. He sees a darkened sky and an uplifted cross. One is dying on it, and dying in love for him. The work which was begun in humiliation is finished in agony and death. And still beneath the cross there is the Mother's form,—Mother now of sorrows as then of joy. Yet is it not still well to call her, even among her tears, “Blessed among women!”—and still in childlike accents to bid her “Pray for us, now and at the hour of our death.”

Or yet once more: the courts of heaven are lying open before his sight. The spot he kneels on, the thought of to-day or yesterday are passed away, nay earth itself is forgotten, and he sees nothing but the crystal sea, and the

great white throne, and the brightness of the Presence of God. Round that exceeding glory there are the folded wings of the Seraphim, and in its heart and centre is the form of the Divine Humanity, the very marks of His piercings bright with an ineffable beauty.

He has entered into His kingdom, and His Saints are reigning with Him. Which of them shall be nearest to Him in glory as once in suffering, but her through whom he joined our human nature to Deity itself? The anguish over, the grace and virtue crowned, the glory never to pass away, surely well may we again call the Queen of Heaven "Blessed among women!"—and more than ever trusting in the power of her intercession, more than ever call on her, "Holy Mary, Mother of God! pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death."

Believe me, then, these are not vain repetitions. All prayers are vain, the best written and the most exactly said, if our lips utter them whilst our hearts are far away. But the fewest words, and those often repeated, may be good and acceptable to God, if they express true feelings of love and contrition, and are spoken from the depths of the heart. The prayer that brings us nearest to Him is the best prayer.

And if whilst we say the Rosary, we give ourselves up to its guidance, and follow Jesus Christ, in thought, through every scene of His life and passion, keeping Him before us, and, as it were, going after Him, from the stable to the Temple, from the Temple to the garden, from the garden to the cross; if we cry to Him, as once He cried to His Father, "saying the same words," (Mark, xiv. 39,) we need not fear to be sent empty away.

Thus the Rosary will teach us every day to think of Him, and if we think of Him, surely to love Him too. What need for more? When will men learn, that to serve God, and to pray to Him aright, it does not need to be clever in our prayers, but only to think well what we are about, and to speak to Him from the bottom of our hearts? Think to yourselves how you would feel if He came and stood before you in bodily presence this very moment. What would you do? Kneel down at His feet, and look up into His gracious face. Or perhaps, if you dared not meet His eye, you would be glad if His dear Mother were standing at His side to plead for you, and to pray for you, as you could not find words to pray for yourself.

You now know something of the Rosary;

THE ROSARY OF THE

its end is to bring you into God's presence, and to help you to lay your heart at His feet. You cannot come there day after day, and yet refuse to love Him; and His love is the end of all prayer,—it is Christianity itself.

Those fifty little beads,—to how many eyes they seem but the barren mockery of prayer! To how many a saintly soul, trained and taught to use them, have they contained the very life-blood of devotion! It is ever so with the things of the Catholic Church. To those who stand without, there is nothing to be seen but the hard cold stones of the material edifice. If you would know the light, the melody, and the fragrance, you must go within.

One thing is very certain,—if an hour spent with Jesus and Mary be a blessed thing, Catholics have a good right to love and use the Rosary.

THE FIFTEEN MYSTERIES OF THE HOLY ROSARY.

THE FIVE JOYFUL MYSTERIES.

1. The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin; in which the angel Gabriel, saluting her with the title "Full of grace," declares unto her that she is chosen to be the

BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

Mother of God : whereupon the Second Person in the Eternal Trinity becomes incarnate in her chaste womb.

2. The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin to her cousin St. Elizabeth ; in which St. John the Baptist is sanctified in his mother's womb by Jesus yet unborn.

3. The Birth of our Blessed Lord at midnight in the stable of Bethlehem ; when the choirs of angels sing anthems in the skies, and the shepherds come to adore the child Jesus.

4. The Presentation of our Blessed Lord in the Temple by His Virgin Mother ; when holy Simeon receives Him into his arms.

5. The Finding of Jesus among the doctors in the Temple by the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph, after being lost for three days, when a boy of twelve years old.

THE FIVE SORROWFUL MYSTERIES.

1. The Prayer and Agony of our Blessed Lord in the garden of Gethsemani on the night of His betrayal ; when His Body is bathed in a bloody sweat, which runs down in great drops to the ground.

2. The Scourging of our Blessed Lord, at the pillar, by the soldiers in Pilate's house ; the number of stripes they give Him being about five thousand.

3. The Crowning of our Blessed Lord with thorns ; when these ministers of Satan plat a crown of sharp thorns and most cruelly press it on His sacred Head.

4. The Carrying of the Cross ; in which our Lord Jesus Christ, being sentenced to die, bears with most amazing patience the cross which is laid upon Him for

THE ROSARY, ETC.

His greater torment and ignominy, meeting His Blessed Mother on the way.

5. The Crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ ; in which, being come to Mount Calvary, He is stripped of His clothes, and His Hands and Feet are most cruelly nailed to the cross in the presence of His afflicted Mother.

THE FIVE GLORIOUS MYSTERIES.

1. The Resurrection of our Blessed Lord from the grave on the third day, triumphing gloriously over death.

2. The Ascension of our Blessed Lord from Mount Olivet forty days after His Resurrection ; when He goes up into heaven, attended by angels, in the sight and to the great admiration of His Blessed Mother and His holy Apostles and disciples.

3. The Descent of the Holy Ghost on the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, as they continue in prayer and supplication with the Blessed Virgin Mary, expecting the performance of our Lord's promise.

4. The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin ; in which, after her death, twelve years after the Resurrection, she is assumed into heaven by her Divine Son, accompanied by the holy angels.

5. The Coronation of the Blessed Virgin ; in which, amid the great jubilee and exultation of the whole court of heaven, and to the particular glory of all the Saints, she is crowned by her Son with the brightest diadem of glory.

KNOW POPERY;

OR,

**ARE ALL THESE CONVERSIONS
NOTHING TO ME!**



NEW YORK:
EDWARD DUNIGAN AND BROTHER,
151 FULTON-STREET NEAR BROADWAY.



KNOW POPERY.

A WISE man has observed, that the early Christians had proofs of the truth of Christianity which we have not, and that we have proofs which they had not. The early Christians did not see, as we see, the Church spread far and wide all over the whole world, as the prophets had promised. They did not see it, as we see it, exalted as a kingdom among all the nations of the earth; the Pope a spiritual sovereign ruling millions of spiritual subjects; the Bishops "as princes in all lands;" the children of the Church acknowledging one government and "one head," as Osee (i. 11) and the other prophets had foretold. They did not see, as we see, the words of our Lord to the Samaritan woman fulfilled, in which He said, that "the Father" should no longer be

“adored” in Jerusalem or on Mount Garizim ; for they did not see sacrifice, which is the supreme worship of God, abolished both by Jews and Protestants, and the “clean oblation,” of which Malachi spoke (i. 11), offered only in Catholic churches throughout the world. Prayer may be, and is, made anywhere, in a Jewish synagogue or in a Protestant cathedral ; but the great Christian sacrifice is offered only on the altars of the Catholic Church. In a word the prophets had raised an expectation about the Church of Christ which the early Christians did not see fulfilled as conspicuously and as extensively as it was to be fulfilled in after times.

The sort of proof of Christianity, then, which we have, and they had not, may be said to come to this, that it answers the expectations it had raised. This proof at least exists with all its force for Catholics. Protestants, I suppose, must allow that Christianity, according to them, does not literally fulfil the expectations which the prophets had raised concerning Christ's kingdom ; for they either explain these prophecies in a figurative sense, or refer their fulfilment to some future dispensation. However, all will allow that it is a very strong

proof, where such can be had, when a religion externally fulfils the expectations it had raised.

Again, there is another class of expectations which religion may be said to create; these are of an internal nature. Man is here in a state of weakness, want, and sin; and religion undertakes to provide remedies: it promises certain gifts, and tells us that it can satisfy certain desires and needs of our moral nature. Now, if those who embrace a religion assure us that they have found these expectations answered, here is another proof of the truth of that religion.

Some years back several Oxford professors began studying the Fathers of the Church, holy men who wrote during the first ages of Christianity. By studying these ancient writings they had certain expectations raised as to what the Church was and ought to be; and these expectations, I may tell you by the way, agreed in a wonderful manner with those which the Bible would naturally be calculated to raise, but which, as I have said, Protestants explain away. Now, these learned men looked about them in their own Church, and finding nothing therein to answer these expectations, they were led to inquire into the state of "Popery."

Then they found that the "Popish" religion answered the expectations which the old Christian doctors, as well as the Bible, had raised, and was the sort of Christianity which those doctors had written about. This proof they felt to be so very strong that many of them ultimately embraced it.

But this was not all: the more they endeavored to live in accordance with the commandments of God, and to realize the high gifts promised by God in His Church, the more they felt that their wants and desires could find no adequate satisfaction where they were. The Catholic Church promised to do it, and they tried it. Others, again, followed their example; some attracted by its external agreement with Christianity, as they had been led to conceive of it, some allured by its promises of an internal accordance therewith.

But meanwhile there were plenty of people hard at work to give them very different expectations. "Popery," *they* said, "is a very shocking religion; it fetters the intellect, it interferes with liberty of conscience; it has corrupted the primitive simplicity of Apostolic times; it has brought in new and false doctrines; it confuses together God, the Virgin,

and the Saints, and worships them all alike. It teaches men to lie and to be deceitful; it is ruinous to civil society. If you join it, remember, not a shilling more shall you have from me;" or, "all intercourse between us must cease;" or, "you shall have a father's curse upon you." But neither father's curse, nor loss of friends, nor fear of poverty, kept many back from giving "Popery" a trial. Are the expectations which its enemies endeavored to raise fulfilled? No: the intellect, instead of being fettered, is enlightened; it now, as for the first time, realizes what true spiritual worship is; the conscience finds it has been mistaking the liberty of the natural mind for its own true liberty, and is freed by frequent confession from the slavery of sin. Rid of this burden, the convert to "Popery" can look up to God without confounding Him with the Saints, or even with His blessed Mother. He ceases not to believe that hell is the place for liars, or to venerate civil authorities, though he does not give them power to decide whether baptism is or is not "for the remission of sins."

Here, then, are two expectations, or rather two sets of expectations, raised about the Catholic Church. To the one set the venerable

pocket lends its august sanction ; a frowning friend assures you that his predictions will be fulfilled ; and an angry father thunders out his anathemas, if you will not believe that his anticipations will come true. Protestants have repeated tales again and again about Rome, till they have come to believe them, and these tales form only the ground of the expectations which they endeavor to raise against "Popery." Such lies, like the idolatry of the Gentiles, have been handed on for several generations, till all the world has them by heart ; and they are received as matters of course, which do not call for any proof. Nevertheless, the said set of expectations are not answered ; while the former set of expectations are amply fulfilled.

Now suppose ten persons had joined the Catholic Church, and found their expectations answered, would this be enough to prove the truth of its claims? Decidedly not. But it would undoubtedly furnish a certain amount of witness in its favor. If two masons told me my house was coming down about my ears, I should say, "Well, they know what a house ought to be better than I do, so I shall look into the matter." But if a hundred told me the same, I should be a fool for staying another

KNOW POPERY.

moment in it. I say this only to show this one thing, that the more people there are who, independently of each other, are satisfied about a particular fact, the greater the reason to believe it to be true. If all the people who have come to "know Popery" experimentally, are satisfied with it, it must at least be something very different to what you take it for. If ten people tried it in spite of all the abuse heaped upon it, and liked it, even this would be a startling fact; but when a hundred or a thousand, or more, are all delighted with the change, it is clear that you who go on railing against "Popery" do not "know Popery." Those who abuse it the most are, almost universally, the most ignorant of it; those who know it best, if they do not come to embrace it, at least refrain in general from speaking disrespectfully of it, and often even find much to admire in it. What has been said, then, comes to this, that when we are ignorant of any thing, and we perceive that in proportion as people become acquainted with it, their dislike diminishes and their approbation increases, we have good reason for doubting the evil opinion we entertain of it. And, secondly, that when a religion fulfils and satisfies the expectations it has raised,

and this in a very large number of cases coming under our own observation, we have good reason to believe that we ourselves should be satisfied if we tried it; and, in short, that that religion really is what it professes to be. But let us endeavor to look at the thing in a more serious light, and see whether the very fact that so many others are satisfied, puts us under any obligations to inquire for ourselves. Any single man may be whimsical, or fanciful, or obstinate in sticking to a crotchet when once he has taken it up; but it would be absurd to suppose that this should happen to be the case with any considerable number of persons. When, moreover, these persons are well-informed on other matters as well as on religion, the chances are still further diminished; and when, in addition, they have had a great deal to give up, in order to act upon their convictions, the chances are very, very small indeed. It is plain they gain nothing in this world by the change; it is clear they must hope to gain something in the next. Let us consider, then, whether anybody is at liberty to stand coolly by, and look on unconcerned at this strange unaccountable conduct; for such it ought to seem even to the most bigoted Protestant, upon

any principles which he can bring to explain the fact.

Now, if we were to try and put ourselves back into the days of St. Peter and St. Paul, certainly the conduct of Protestants and of heathens would furnish several striking points of resemblance. Without wishing to make ourselves out to be as good as Paul and Barnabas, or our Protestant neighbors as bad as pagans, still we may be like the Apostles in several points, and they like the heathen. Paul is a convert to Christianity; he belonged to "the strictest sect of the Pharisees," just as Mr. A. B., a convert from Protestantism, had been strict according to the notions of his sect. Paul was told certain things about the Catholic Church, and found, upon trial, it answered his expectations. Full of zeal, he preaches again and again to his old Jewish friends. They see nothing of the interior grace which converted him; they have heard him tell a cock-and-bull story about a vision, but of course they do not believe it, and laugh at the whole affair. However, he goes preaching on still, and, among other countries, he makes an "aggression" on Lycaonia (Acts xiv. 6, &c.). Titius and Caius were respectable Lycaonians;

they went to public worship every day, and sacrificed to Jupiter regularly; it was the established religion, and had the support of the law; it was the religion of their fathers, and was mixed up with all their institutions and customs; they were used to it, and liked it; their "clergy" were learned and gentlemanly men; they were themselves well-educated persons, and set an example of all the virtues in repute in Lycaonia. They do not like having their household gods thrust aside, and all their old family associations broken through by this man Paul; his fancies have no charm for them; and as for the miracles which people say he works, they never saw any of them; they doubt whether he ever did work any; at any rate, they are certain that there is no clear, undeniable proof for them.

However, Paul makes converts by degrees; he tells them of the blessing of confessing their sins, and renouncing their past life, and promises them a great gift from heaven if they will embrace the religion he preaches. They follow his advice, and find themselves both the better and the happier for it; the expectations he had raised are fully satisfied, and they declare as much openly and loudly to their countrymen.

Somehow or other he gets such hold on the people, that the Jews are jealous, stir up the multitude, and have him stoned. Titius and Caius are glad to see all this zeal for the old established religion, and thank Jupiter very devoutly. Titius and Caius in the course of time die and go to hell, to suffer eternally for their unbelief. There the Evil Spirit triumphs over them: "Ah ha! you saw that one person after another embraced the Christian religion, and was satisfied with it; yes, lost and accursed souls," shrieks the fiend, "if you had thought a little, you might have known that men do not leave their fathers and mothers, wives and brethren, friends and homes and comforts, for mere whim and fancy, and then we should not have caught you; but you kept to the old established religion, just only because it was established, and for no better reason; you would not heed the miracles of grace which the God we hate was working in men's hearts all about you; you would not honestly face the question, and see if there was any thing in it; you hoped and wished it might not be true, and would neither make inquiry of the Christian converts, nor attend one of Paul's sermons for instruction; you made your love of friends and

home and old associations serve for reasons, and would not listen to what would have helped you to conquer those lusts and passions which have drowned you in endless perdition." So saying, he plunges with them into that abyss of fire, where, with their tormentors, they shall have their abode and their portion forever.

Now, I am not venturing to say what degree of neglect in examining the evidence for the truth amounts to a direct turning away from it, that is to say, to the sin of unbelief; but I do say that it is a fearful consideration when a man has had the truth brought before him, and for one reason or another has failed to examine it. I appeal, not to those Pharisees who think themselves just, but to those who know in their hearts that they are sinners—to those, in fact, whom Christ came to call (Matt. ix. 13)—and I ask them to tell me honestly, whether they would dare to accuse Almighty God of injustice if He punished the unbelieving Lycaonians in this way. Put the case that they had never seen a miracle, or been in the neighborhood of one; but that they merely knew that one Paul had preached amongst them a religion which not only had much in it which was distasteful to man's natural inclinations, but involved

many painful sacrifices; that he himself was a convert to it, and had prevailed on others to follow his example, and that he and they, notwithstanding all they had given up for Christianity, remained satisfied with it, and would die rather than return to their former religion. Now I say, if a heathen knew no more than this, does any reasonable man mean, to assert that such a heathen might not have learnt the truth, had he been willing? Is it sufficient justification of him to say, that he never understood the nature of the doctrines that were taught, when he might have had them explained had he inquired? Was there not sufficient to make it his duty to inquire? Does not such an one risk incurring the fearful judgment of those who "receive not the love of the truth, that they may be saved?" (2 Thess. ii. 10.) I say then, that the very existence of a large body of converts in this country is a startling fact. Because unreflecting people do not think themselves obliged to read or to hear about "Popery," does it therefore follow that God, who has placed them near so many converts to "Popery," does not account them responsible for their indifference?

Perhaps some people may be disposed to

urge in reply to what I have said, "We are not so ignorant of 'Popery' as you have supposed; we have read a great deal about it, which has been written by learned men; in believing what they say, we take things upon trust, and that is just what you recommend." Let me understand you, I would answer: Is what you have read about "Popery" taken from books written by its adversaries, either to refute it, or to cut it up and make it look ridiculous and odious? If so, you must see that such an account of it is hardly likely to be a very fair one. But you may answer, "How am I to know that? I am unlearned, and cannot judge for myself." I reply, first of all, that this is not a question of learning, but a matter of fact. Have you taken the trouble to ascertain whether what these persons state of Catholic doctrine be correct; for if not, what matter their arguments, whether learned or unlearned? We tell you, and every Catholic will tell you, that their statements are altogether false; that they have either never understood, or grossly misrepresented, the religion which they so virulently assail. Learned as they may seem to you, and learned as they may really be on other points, they have taken

their notions of Catholic doctrine second-hand, just as you in your turn have taken your notions from them. Besides, numbers of learned men have judged, and do judge, the other way. You cannot say, "How am I to know that?" because everybody knows that there are a large body of converts from all classes, both learned and unlearned. But more than this, who is there that does not know, or might not know, that the Catholic religion was the religion of all Christendom for more than fifteen hundred years, and that ever since it has been held and believed by far the greater number of professed Christians? Remember, too, that religion is not a mere paper theory, but a practical thing, and that those who have *tried* it are the only people to tell you what it really is. If, then, the whole of the Christian world for many centuries believed the Catholic religion to be the only true religion; if the largest body of Christians now existing think it is so too; and if many people in your own country are joining it every day, and declare themselves satisfied with it,—by what law of common sense or of charity do you decide that it is a very shocking religion? What right have you to go on abusing it as you do, without ever reading a

single book written in defence or explanation of it by a Catholic, and without inquiring at the lips of those who have tried it? Is not this very like having made up your mind which religion you will have, without caring at all which religion God wishes you to have?

People often say that the Catholic religion loves to keep people in ignorance, that it may tyrannize over them as it pleases. Ignorance, then, you allow, helps a cunning person to tyrannize over another. Consider, therefore, if by any chance, as you are very ignorant of the Catholic religion, you may not be the dupes of certain designing people who wish to keep you in ignorance of what it really is. Are you sure, for instance, that the Established Church of this country has no object of its own, quite unconnected with your spiritual welfare, in making you hate "Popery?" Do you know any thing of the history of the said Established Church? Do you know at all who they were who tried to put down "Popery" some three hundred years ago, and what means they used to effect their purpose? Do you know who got hold of the lands and the revenues of the monasteries and other religious houses belonging to the Catholic Church? Did you ever

reflect that Protestantism has considerably to do with many people's worldly interests, with how much they have a year, and the position they hold in society; and that "No Popery" being interpreted means, "Let us alone; why torment us before the time?" Any how, there is one person I wot of who hates you with a hatred far surpassing even that with which Protestants hate "Popery;" who is the determined foe of human liberty, and whose interest it is to persuade you to remain in ignorance; who would be vexed beyond imagination if he saw you thinking of doing any thing to free yourselves from the slavery in which he delights to keep you—the slavery to creatures, or to secret lusts and passions—and the person I mean is the Devil. What if God should say to you, "Out of thine own mouth I will judge thee, O thou wicked servant! You said that ignorance was favorable to tyranny; and though I put so many converts before you, to lead you to inquire, you chose ignorance, and proudly thought *you* could not be deceived."

Neither can you say, "I see there are many converts to 'Popery;' but I have myself a certain faith which I hold, and a certain inward conviction of its truth; am I right in

shaking that faith by inquiry? To question a matter of faith is to doubt about it; and to doubt about a matter of faith is to disbelieve it. 'Once to doubt is once to be resolved;' once let me doubt the truth of my present creed, and I do as good as resolve on changing it." I am very glad to have this question to answer, because it is one on which the whole matter turns. It is certainly not the duty of any one to question an article of faith; or rather it is his bounden duty to resist any such temptation to doubt. But is it any article of faith which Catholics call upon you to question? Strong opinions, prejudices, notions, I own; but be these ever so strong, they never can arrive at being articles of faith; nor do you pretend that they have any title to be considered as such. The Catholic does not call upon you to renounce what you know to be true. Any body of men, however numerous or respectable, who should require this of you would have no claim on your attention. If any large body of men were to declare themselves converts to atheism, the Protestant would not therefore be called upon to question the being of a God. No large body of converts to Mahometanism, or to Mormonism, in this country would have

KNOW POPERY.

the slightest pretension to be listened to, because they avowedly either deny the fact of the Christian revelation, or pretend to have received one which supersedes it. This is not the accusation of their enemies, which may or may not be true, but their own account of themselves. Now, little as you know of "Popery," you at least are aware that the objections which people raise against it are founded on the large demands which it makes on their belief, not on its denial of any truths which they already hold. It is true that many persons will tell you that the further doctrines which it teaches really contradict other Christian truths; and if this were so, it would be a valid objection. But, as I have before remarked, Catholics with one voice deny this to be the case; and when you see friends and neighbors, and men whom you respect, and whom you know to be as firm believers in these truths as you are yourselves, embracing the Catholic faith, and when they tell you that, so far from giving up what they really held before, they have only a clearer and a deeper insight into divine truth,—you are bound assuredly to ascertain how the matter really stands.

But, in fact, you know very well that all that is essentially Protestant in your belief is not a matter of faith at all. We do not deny that Protestants have retained many fragments of divine truth, and that such as have been rightly baptized have received in their baptism faith, which is the gift of God. If, therefore, they have not lost this supernatural gift by wilful unbelief, they still hold by faith such truths as they know; and even where this precious gift has been lost, a vast number of them still continue to believe with a human faith the Christian truths they have been taught. You whom I am addressing doubtless believe these truths in a sense in which you cannot be said to believe your own anti-Catholic notions and prejudices. The truths I mean are such as these: the being of a God, a divine revelation, our redemption by Christ, a judgment to come. But then remember, these are the very points which, so far as they go, you hold in common with Catholics, only that Catholics know and believe much more which their religion has taught them; while the much more which you think you know and believe are merely negations of the Catholic faith, taken up on trust from other people, and those you have lived

with, and held with more or less of obstinacy. In your hearts you feel this; and are afraid to inquire, not because you think it wrong to do so, but because you fear the result. Own the truth, then; you are afraid to use the natural means of being convinced, lest you should be convinced. Faith, as I have said, is the gift of God, and all the reading and inquiring in the world will not suffice without that gift. But suppose a heathen refused to learn to read lest he should find his reason captivated with the Bible, would you not say that he was blocking up the avenues of his understanding against the truth? Would you not say that a person so minded was rendering belief impossible to himself? We have no right to expect that God will take us by storm with supernatural gifts, when we will not use our natural gifts. A heathen who will not learn to read lest he should come to believe in Christianity, and a Protestant who will not inquire lest he should come to believe in "Popery," are both doing the same thing. Neither the one nor the other absolutely *knows* that he is right, and therefore is not justified in relying confidently on his own opinion. There is all the difference in the world between the certainty of a thing and

ourselves feeling certain about it. Every fool and thoughtless person feels certain about fifty things in which his friends know him to be mistaken. Never, then, confound opinion with knowledge, or confidence with faith.

Turn the thing whichever way you will, you cannot make out that the number of converts is not a matter which personally concerns you. You have no right to stand looking on at your ease, as if nothing was happening about you. It is quite possible, as I have shown you, that such conduct may lead to your everlasting misery. You must yourselves grant that, admitting for a moment the possibility of the truth of the Catholic religion, you have had it brought before you in a way which will have made you responsible for its rejection. It is only by begging the question of its falsehood, which I have shown you you have no right to do, that you are able to shut your eyes to this alarming fact. I would earnestly entreat every single Protestant seriously to ask himself, whether he has any reason to give to himself, to his conscience, to his God, for the change which has taken place in so many people. Let him not play a trick upon his conscience by keeping out of its sight the fact that there

are so many converts. Let him not say, this man is fanciful, that man is eccentric, a third was always a bad reasoner, a fourth was of a morbid temperament, and so on. This is cheating his conscience, and acting as foolishly as a man would do who said, "Wine does not cost much, and dinner is not very expensive, and a new coat is cheap, and a house may be had at a reasonable price, and therefore all of them together do not cost any great deal." There is no fallacy more common than this when people want to cheat their conscience; they look at one thing at a time, and then forget it; instead of which, what they have to consider is, what they amount to taken all together. Besides which, you ought never to use an argument which proves too much for your purpose. Every man has his peculiarity, his fault, or his bent of mind; do you not see that any accumulation of proof may be disposed of in this way? If the testimony of a hundred can thus be got rid of, why not that of a thousand? why not that of a million? why not that of all mankind? It is impossible that the weaknesses and follies of people not altogether fools should just lead them separately in considerable numbers to one conclusion.

When rich and poor, pious and sinful, learned and unlearned, all come to the Church, and all express their satisfaction with it, this is enough to lead serious minds to reflect.

Neither can it be said, "Oh, it is a toy, a fashion, of which people will get tired after a while!" It is surprising that men are not ashamed of making such an assertion. Is it often the fashion for persons to do things which compromise all their worldly interests? Do they choose for their toy what involves the sacrifice of all that the natural heart holds dear? It is just what the pagans might have said of the Christians in Nero's days, and indeed what they did say. But to come to facts. If you found that people were less and less satisfied with the change as time went on, then you might complain of this "know Popery" cry as a cheat. But it is just the reverse. Everybody who turns Catholic, and does his duty, grows more and more satisfied every day. Why be so senseless as to say people will get tired of it, when you have not a shadow of ground for such an expectation? If Demas, Diotrophes, or Alexander, got tired of Christianity, what of that? So many did not, that we may say *all* who tried it were satisfied with

it; and so we may say of Catholicity, in spite of the possibility of producing one or two exceptions. It would be most absurd to argue from these one or two exceptions, and to say, "My friend A will get tired of the change as Z did." It would be much more reasonable to say, "My friend A will be satisfied with his new religion, as B, C, D, E, F, and almost all the other letters of the alphabet ten times over have been."

Upon the whole, then, it is a clear undeniable fact, that there are a great many converts; and it is pretty clear also, that there is a great deal of shuffling to account for it. Few consider whether divine grace be not, after all, the easiest mode of accounting for it; yet Christ did say something about His religion being one which would send fire on the earth, and make a man's foes to be those of his own household. This prophecy, some people will say, was meant only for the first ages of Christianity; but Christ Himself has not been at the pains to inform us of this limitation, so "very full of comfort" to an easy age like our own, where the utmost extent of religious obligation seems to consist in families being pewed together once or twice a week. Certain it is, that there

is one religion which contrives to fulfil this prophecy pretty constantly. If Christ raised this expectation about His religion, the Catholic religion answers it.

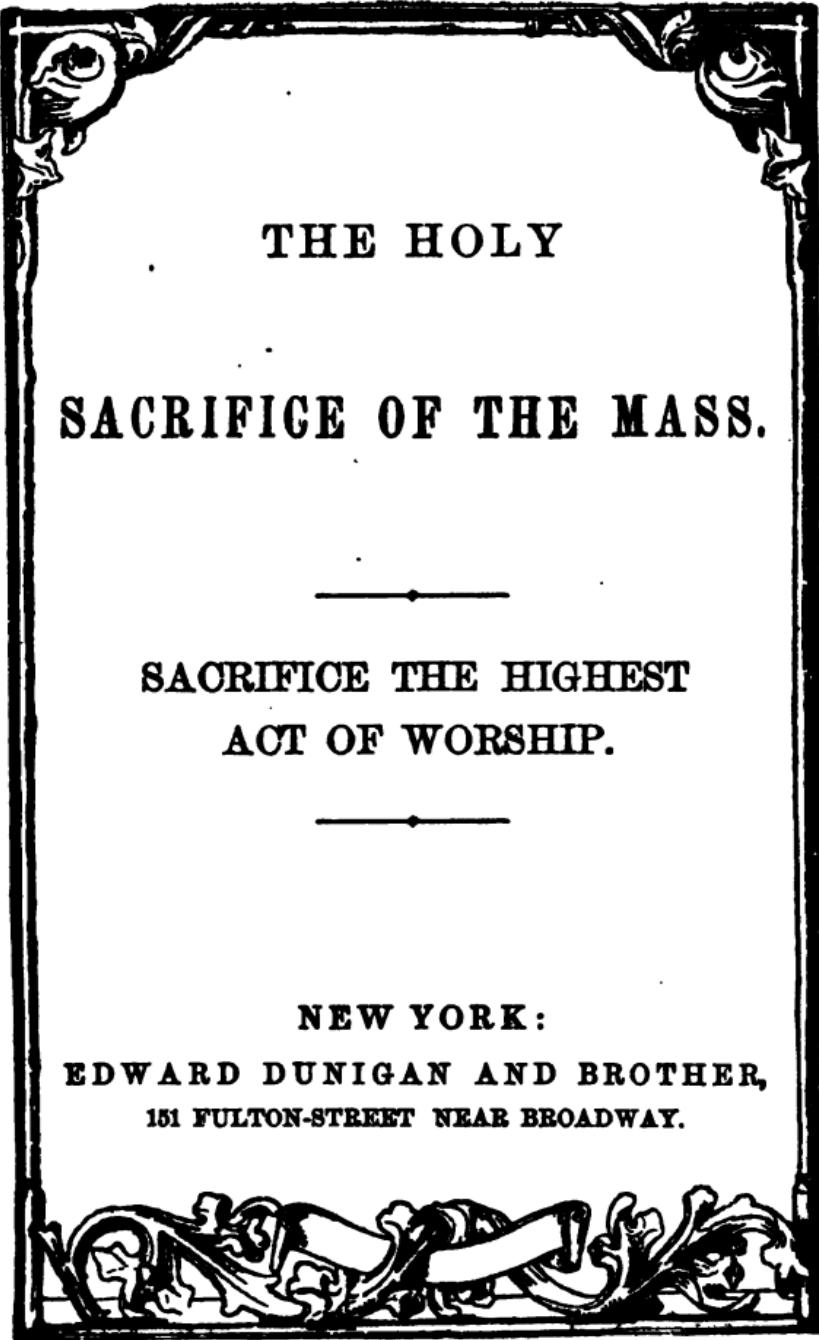
Nothing which is here said is meant to imply that the number of converts proves the Catholic religion to be the true one. It is not enough to prove it in and by itself, but it helps towards it. What is chiefly urged here is the fact of conversions, as one which should alarm religious minds, and lead reflecting people to inquire into the merits of a religion which is producing such notable effects. While this process is going on, forty days' abstinence from all abusive language against "Popery" will be found very useful. There is no sin in abstaining from "railing accusation;" it may even be a virtuous deed to repress righteous indignation for a month or so, just to be quite sure that it is righteous; especially if we are prodigiously and ludicrously ignorant of the whole matter we are talking about. A little prayer also for light on the subject may be safely recommended.

The Jews, who saw our Lord's miracles, were not convinced by them, and would not acknowledge that they were God's doing. They

could find many good reasons, as they fancied them, for denying this. Our Lord came out of Nazareth, a little town of ill repute. He had never learnt letters. He ate and drank like other men. He ate and drank with publicans and sinners. He did not wash His hands before eating. He healed men on the Sabbath day. He forgave men their sins. He said God was His Father, and that He was older than Abraham. All these seemed to them very plausible reasons for rejecting Him; and so no matter the miracles, though performed under their very eyes so that they could not be denied; no matter the numerous conversions—what signified conversions, when none of the rulers had believed on Him? (John vii. 48)—ah! here we have the true reason—the conversions must at any rate be stopped; our Lord Himself must be put to death, lest all the world should go after Him (xii. 19). And so “Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, assembled together against the holy child Jesus” (Acts iv. 27). Thus also it is in England at the present time; miracles of grace are going on around you; numbers are pouring into the Catholic Church every day. Of course, however, God has

KNOW POPERY.

nothing to do with this; and why not? Because it tells against the Established Church, which our rulers and wealthy people uphold. Ho! Caiaphas, Annas, Pilate, Herod, how shall we stop these conversions? Something must be done! No Popery!



THE HOLY
SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

SACRIFICE THE HIGHEST
ACT OF WORSHIP.

NEW YORK:
EDWARD DUNIGAN AND BROTHER,
151 FULTON-STREET NEAR BROADWAY.

SACRIFICE THE HIGHEST ACT OF WORSHIP.

PROTESTANTISM is the only religion without a sacrifice. Every other religion since the creation of the world has had a sacrifice; and as Protestantism is only 300 years old, it is only for the last 300 years of the world that the strange sight has been beheld of a people believing themselves to possess a divine religion, and yet a religion without a sacrifice. The old Bible patriarchs had their sacrifices; the Jews had their sacrifices; even pagan nations had their sacrifices; the Catholic Church has its sacrifice—the most holy sacrifice of the Mass; but Protestantism has none. Protestantism took upon itself to abolish the great Christian sacrifice; it did away with that which everywhere, and in all times, and by all Christians throughout the world, was regarded as the

SACRIFICE

highest and most essential act of divine worship. It is of the utmost consequence, my Protestant friends, that you should understand the nature of this tremendous change; for it is this that makes the difference, I might say the whole difference, between Protestantism and the Catholic Church,—that Protestantism has rejected, and the Catholic Church alone has retained, the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

The sacrifice of the Mass—these words, I dare say, convey little or no meaning to your minds. If you have been into a Catholic church while the early morning service was going on, you probably are aware that you have been present at something called Mass: but what Mass is, what it was that was done while you were looking on, you know as little as you do what was going on in the moon during the same space of time. You saw lights on the altar, and a priest in a rich dress, with his back to the people, kneeling and bowing and moving to and fro, and saying something to himself in a low voice, and a boy in a surplice making answers now and then, and people clustering round intent upon their prayers and on what the priest was doing. Or if it was Sunday or some festival, and you were at the

THE HIGHEST ACT OF WORSHIP.

church rather later in the day, you saw more lights, and more kneelings and bowings and movings to and fro ; and there was the smoke of incense rising, and the organ playing, and the choir chanting ; in fact, there was a finer ceremony, and as you have heard others say, so you would say, more “mummeries” and more “superstition.” You may have been struck with the solemnity and beauty of what you saw, and perhaps it may have affected you in some strange way that surprised and half alarmed you ; but what it all meant, and why people with understandings like your own should be so deeply interested in what was being said and done,—though to them it was no novelty, as it was to you, but an ordinary occurrence,—you know no more than you did before.

Well, this being so, I am going to tell you what the Mass is. You have seen enough to perceive that it is not merely a form of prayers, like a Protestant service, but that something is being *done* as well as *said*. You are right: the Mass is not a mere form of prayers ; it is a sacrifice. First of all, then, I must tell you what a sacrifice is, and show you how it is, as I have said, the highest and most essential act of divine worship.

You probably know what a sacrifice is literally: you know what it was among the Jews; how, for instance, they took a lamb, and slew it, and burned its flesh on the altar, and so offered it to God. But I wish you to understand what was meant by all this. I need not tell you who made you, for you know it was God; but did you ever try and think what it was to be God's creature; to owe your very being to Him; one moment to be nothing, and the next to come into being, and all by the sole will of God; so that, were He to will it, you would in an instant be nothing again, as you were before He made you? If you meditate on this, you will feel, as perhaps you never felt before, that you belong wholly to God. Nothing stands to you in the place in which you stand to God: nothing you possess, whether it have life or not, is yours in the sense in which you are God's. The animal you kill, the fuel you consume, the food you eat, have their existence independently of you; but you, as they also, have no existence out of God. It is not only that God is great and strong, and that you are little and weak, but that you exist only by the act of His will. It is not only that you are God's property, and

that He has the power of life and death over you, but that out of Him you are nothing. Words cannot express the full reality of this tremendous truth; God is All, and you are nothing. Thus not only all you have but all you are is His. You owe Him your life, your very being, in one word, yourself. This is the debt you owe to God by the very fact of your existence. You the creature owe yourself to God the Creator.

Hence we see what the worship of God is. It is to pay the debt we owe Him. It is to offer ourselves, to make an entire surrender of ourselves to Him; to consume, as it were, and annihilate ourselves before Him. Had mankind never sinned, were we born into the world as holy as was Adam before the fall, nothing less than this could have satisfied the debt we owe to God, simply as the Author of our being, the All Holy, Almighty, Infinite, Eternal God. But we are not in this blessed state; we lost our innocence when Adam fell. When Adam sinned, we became sinners, and, as sinners, subject to death, the punishment of sin. Our state was changed. Before we owed the homage of our whole being, but now we owed the penalty of death. And not only so, we had incurred a

debt which nothing we had, to give could satisfy. God was angry with us; we were guilty in His sight; we needed forgiveness and reconciliation; and how were these to be obtained? In His love and mercy God provided a way. At the very moment when He pronounced upon our first parents the sentence of punishment, He told them of a Deliverer who was to come, and for whose sake He would pardon and accept them and their children. This Deliverer was none other than our Saviour Jesus Christ, the Second Person in the Eternal Trinity, who was to become man and to die for us.

But God did not merely tell them of this Deliverer; He taught them a religious rite by which they might have a present interest in the work He was to do, and, as it were, forestall the benefit of His death. This religious rite was *sacrifice*. It prefigured the great propitiatory sacrifice of Christ. It was the solemn act of worship by which men offered themselves to God; by which they paid the homage they owed Him as His creatures; by which they acknowledged themselves sinners, made expiation for sin, and obtained forgiveness. Sacrifice, then, was of divine institution: it was not practised merely on account of the fitness of

THE HIGHEST ACT OF WORSHIP.

the act; and yet observe how wonderfully it expresses the kind of worship which is due from men to God. That which is sacrificed is consumed and destroyed, at least it undergoes such a change as in effect amounts to destruction; and by this act men showed that they owed all to God, and were as nothing in His sight. But the shedding of blood is something more. An unbloody sacrifice, as, for instance, a sacrifice of corn and wine, were such offering as an innocent creature might make to his Creator: a bloody sacrifice is the offering of sinful creatures to their offended God. And mark how significant was such a sacrifice of the sinner's needs, and of his condition before God. The victim which he slew, whose blood he poured out, and whose body he burned and consumed, represented himself; and by these several acts he acknowledged the debt he owed to God; that his life was forfeited for his sin, and that suffering was his eternal portion should God deal with him according to his deserts. At the same time he testified his faith in the promises of God, and his steadfast hope that the true Victim, the Lamb without spot, would one day come to take away his sin and restore him to the favor of God.

Two things are plain from what has been said. First, that no sacrifice, whether bloody or unbloody, had any power in itself to take away sin or to call down blessings from God : it had power only as being a type or figure of the sacrifice of Christ. The real victim of propitiation was Jesus Christ, thus slain in figure and in promise. Secondly, that no sacrifice was acceptable to God, unless it was accompanied with the interior sacrifice of the heart ; that is to say, with true contrition and devotion on the part of the worshipper. I do not mean, that this interior sacrifice of the heart was sufficient without the exterior sacrifice of the altar : far from it. The sacrifice of the altar was God's institution and ordinance ; it was the way by which he desired to be approached and worshipped by His people ; the means by which they were to have an interest in the future sacrifice of Christ. It was necessary therefore to assist at this sacrifice in order to be accepted by God ; and all I wish you to observe is, that those only were *benefited* by it who offered or assisted at it with proper dispositions.

Again, sacrifice was the great act of *public* worship. From the first, God required that

THE HIGHEST ACT OF WORSHIP.

men should render Him some common acknowledgment of His sovereign dominion over them, and make open profession of His service, as well as confession of their needs. And sacrifice—not common prayer merely, but solemn sacrifice—was that act of divine worship which He appointed for this end. They who would serve God acceptably must offer public sacrifice.

But to proceed: sacrifice dates from the Fall. We read that “the Lord God made for Adam and his wife garments of skins” (Gen. iii. 21), before he drove them out of Paradise; and as the animals whose skins He took had certainly not been slain for food, in all probability they formed the first sacrifice ever offered to God by fallen man. But be this as it may, it is plain that sacrifices were offered in the very earliest ages of the world. Cain and Abel, the two sons of Adam, offered sacrifice. “Cain offered of the fruits of the earth, gifts to the Lord. Abel also offered of the firstlings of his flock, and of their fat” (Gen iv. 3, 4). We find also this remarkable record, that “the Lord had respect to Abel and to his offerings; but to Cain and his offerings He had no respect” (vers. 4, 5). Whether it was the matter of

Cain's sacrifice, or the spirit in which it was offered, or both one and the other, that displeased God and made Him reject his offerings, does not appear; but it would seem from a following verse (ver. 7) as if he had made no acknowledgment of sin; his offering was not a *sin-offering*, as Abel's was, or it had no reference to the future sacrifice of Christ. But this by the way. Noah, after the destruction of the old world by water, immediately on going forth from the ark, sacrificed to the Lord. He "took of all cattle and fowls that were clean"—which shows that some distinction was made thus early between one animal and another—"and offered holocausts upon the altar" (Gen. viii. 20, 21); that is, whole burnt-offerings, in which the victim was wholly consumed by fire. I need not speak of the sacrifices of Abraham and the other patriarchs, but I may remind you that Job, who was an independent prince, and certainly did not belong to the favored race of Israel, offered holocausts to the Lord (Job i. 5; xlii. 8): of Melchisedech, king of Salem and "priest of the most high God" (Gen. xiv. 18), I shall have much to say hereafter. Again, we read that Joseph's Egyptian father-in-law was the priest of Heliopolis (xli. 45), and

that Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, was the priest of Madian (Exod. iii. 1); of whom also we read (xviii. 12) that he "offered holocausts and sacrifices to God." And again, we find Balaam, from Aram in Mesopotamia, preparing to offer sacrifices (Num. xxiii. 1, &c.). But indeed it is certain, as well from holy Scripture as from profane history, that not in one country only, but all over the inhabited earth, there were priests and sacrifices. Sacrifice was, as I may say, the religion of the whole world. It was the worship which God required, and which was due to Him alone: to offer sacrifice to a creature, however holy and exalted, was idolatry. Hence the Scripture says (Exod. xxii. 20), "He that sacrificeth to gods, save only to the Lord, shall be put to death." This was the sin of the nations, that "when they knew God," and the manner in which it pleased Him to be worshipped, they "did not glorify Him as God" (Rom. i. 21, &c.), but offered sacrifices to creatures, to "corruptible men" like themselves, and "to birds, and to four-footed beasts, and to creeping things;" nay, even to stocks and stones. They retained indeed the use of sacrifices, but lost sight of the true meaning of the rite: they forgot, or but dimly re-

membered, Him who was to come, and sacrificed to false gods and to idols, instead of the one living and supreme God.

Therefore it was that God took the family of Abraham to be His own peculiar people, in which His true worship should be preserved, and of which should be born the promised Saviour. After He had led them out of Egypt by the hand of Moses, He set apart one particular tribe, that of Levi, for the service of the altar, and one particular family, that of Aaron, for the office of the priesthood. Hitherto it would seem that the heads of families were ordinarily the ministers of the altar, though at the same time there were those who, like Melchisedech, were invested with a special sacerdotal dignity. But now God instituted a regular order of priests, to whom it alone appertained to offer sacrifices. These sacrifices were of four kinds: 1. the holocaust, or whole burnt-offering; 2. the thank-offering; 3. the sin-offering; 4. the peace-offering. These four different kinds of sacrifices, you will perceive, comprise all the several ends of divine worship, viz.: 1. to render supreme honor and glory to God; 2. to give Him thanks for His innumerable benefits; 3. to appease His anger and ob-

tain from Him the pardon of our sins; 4. to ask of Him those graces and blessings of which we stand in need. In the holocaust, as I have said, the victim was entirely consumed by fire; but in the other three it was only partly consumed, and of the rest the priests and people partook, thus making of it a kind of spiritual banquet or communion. There were bloody sacrifices and unbloody sacrifices; that is to say, sacrifices of living creatures, as sheep, lambs, oxen, pigeons, &c., and sacrifices of things without life, as fine flour with oil and frankincense, unleavened cakes, and the like. But all this you will find detailed at length in the first seven chapters of the book of Leviticus. There you will learn how God commanded His chosen people to worship Him; how in some way or other sacrifice was the one great religious action of their lives. Every morning and every evening incense was burnt and a lamb was offered as a holocaust to God. On the Sabbath, or seventh day of the week, the offering was doubled; every new month was made holy to the Lord by still more abundant sacrifices; and all the great festivals were solemnized in a similar manner throughout the year. But more than this: sacrifice was not

the national religion only; it was the religion of the individual man. It was associated with every circumstance of his life. If he had committed any sin, he confessed it, and offered sacrifice for it, he led the victim to the priest, and laid his hand upon its head, to show that the innocent animal was going to bear his sins, and to die in his place. Then it was slain by the priest, and the blood poured round about the altar. Or if he desired to obtain any particular blessing or mercy, he did in like manner; and again, if the blessing were granted, or any particular mercy had been bestowed upon him.

I beg you to consider all this, and to think how in the old Church before Christ came, as well before the Deluge as after, the religion which God gave to man was a religion of sacrifices. It was one continual offering of sacrifices; daily, every day, on every occasion, public and private. The fire upon the altar was never suffered to go out; the smoke of the sacrifices went up continually; and the blood of the victims never ceased to flow round about the altar. It is quite true that all these sacrifices were to cease when Christ came; because they were all merely typical of His one great sacrifice of Himself; but still, I say, consider,

THE HIGHEST ACT OF WORSHIP.

what a very different kind of religion this was to the Protestant religion, or to any form of religion which a Protestant would think to be a *divine* religion. And yet it *was* a divine religion; it was, as I have said, the religion which God gave to His people: more than this, it was the religion which was to prepare them for Christianity; nay, more even than this, it was the shadow and the figure of Christianity. The Christian religion was the fulfilment and the completion of the Jewish. The Jewish religion was Christianity in the germ or in the bud; it not only preceded it, but implicitly contained it; so that it is true to say that the Jewish religion was Christianity undeveloped, and that Christianity was the Jewish religion developed and fulfilled. The Gospel was the fulfilment of the law (Matt. v. 17): "the law was our pedagogue in Christ" (Gal. iii. 24), "our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ" (Prot. version). The Jewish religion was to train and educate men for the Christian religion. They were taught to worship in such a way and with such rites and ceremonies, as should make it easy and natural for them to become Christians, and to worship God as Christians, in spirit and in truth. But if Christianity was to have no such solemnities

and rites of worship as the old religion had, how could that religion be a preparation for it? Will any thinking person seriously maintain that the Jewish religion, with its elaborate ceremonial, and, above all, with this unceasing round of sacrifices: the priest, in mystic dress, turned to the altar away from the people, engaged in offering sacrifice to God; the people looking to the altar, on their knees adoring, and offering the victim, together with the priest,—that such a religion was a necessary or a fitting preparation for one that has no altar, no priest, no sacrifice, no ceremonial; whose only church-furniture is a table seldom used, a pulpit, and a reading-desk; whose ministers, whatever they do, turn always to the people, face them in praying as in preaching; perform no priestly office, do nothing indeed which one man might not do as well as another; whose only vestment is a surplice, and even that denounced by many as a “remnant” or “rag of Popery?”

Let a man try and realize his own belief; let him think for an instant what God's worship was in the Jewish Church; let him try and throw his mind into that of a pious Jew, and represent to himself his habits, his belief, his

THE HIGHEST ACT OF WORSHIP.

worship, the daily ever-recurring practices of his life; all that wonderfully vast and multi-form system of sacrificial rites, with which his religious existence was bound up; and then turn and look at Protestantism, which claims to be the fulfilment of all this; not as sophists or poets have decked it out with a phraseology and an imagery borrowed from the theology and the ritual of the Catholic Church, but as it is in all its naked reality: will he say that the Jew was a sort of infant Protestant—a Protestant put to school to learn his religion—placed “under tutors and governors” (Gal. iv. 2), who might form his mind to the Protestant mould? Let him honestly declare whether such is the kind of pupilage to which he would have subjected any child of his, in order to make him at maturer age a Protestant Christian. And is he wiser than God? These were the “elements” or “rudiments” (ver. 3) in which God instructed His chosen people before “the fulness of the time was come.” God educated His children in a system of religion, He habituated them to practices, He nourished and brought them up with ideas, which are as far removed from Protestantism, both in form and in spirit, as it is possible to conceive. The two

religions are not merely different—which, of course, the Catholic maintains the Jewish and the Christian to be—but *contrary* the one to the other. So far from Judaism being a preparation or an introduction to Protestantism, it is absolutely and essentially opposed to it. It throws the worshipper into the very opposite state of mind to that which would naturally lead him to embrace it. He would have to *unlearn* his old religion; not to fill up and perfect what he believed before, but to begin again at the beginning, to *disbelieve* all he had been taught, and learn a new religion. His old religion, far from helping him to become a Christian, would form his greatest hindrance; he would have to resist its influences, and do violence to its principles. Certain I am that if men would but think,—if they would but speak out honestly what they feel, they would fairly acknowledge that Protestantism is not the natural result and development of Judaism; that the latter had more affinity with the “mummeries of superstition”—priests, sacrifices, sacraments, ceremonies—than with the “free spirituality of the Gospel;” in short, that its genius and its tendencies were decidedly Popish?

It is notorious indeed that there are many who, utterly forgetting *whose* religion they are condemning,—utterly forgetting that Judaism was of Divine institution, do not scruple to affirm, with some of the worst heretics of old, that it was a merely formal and carnal religion; as if the all-holy God could be the author of any thing so unworthy of Him. This arises in great measure from a misunderstanding of the words of Scripture. It is true that St. Paul speaks of the Jewish law as “a carnal commandment” (Heb. vii. 16), and of its ordinances as “carnal ordinances” (Prot. version), or “justices of the flesh” (ix. 10). It is true that he calls its rites and ceremonies “weak and needy” (“beggarly,” Prot. version) “elements” (Gal. iv. 9). But why does he so? Not because the Jewish law was in its essence wholly formal and carnal, but because, as contrasted with Christianity, it was imperfect and elementary; fitted rather, as he says, for children, than for full-grown men, and preparatory to a better (comp. Heb. vii. 18, 19). Its ordinances were devoid of life and power; they had no virtue in them, as have the Christian sacraments; they did not convey grace; they were incapable of justifying those who came to them, in-

capable of cleansing from sin, or "making the comers thereunto perfect" "as to the conscience" (ix. 9; x. 1, 4, 11). Holy Scripture contrasts Jewish ordinances with Christian ordinances; and declares that the former were *in themselves* merely external and unprofitable; but it never says that the Jewish religion was a religion only of forms and ceremonies,—a merely external religion, with nothing inward and spiritual about it; a religion which failed to inculcate the true principles of Divine worship. Yet such is the view which Protestants in general seem to take of it. They would make it appear that the Mosaic dispensation was opposed to inward vital religion, and that the Jew knew nothing of true holiness. And so they say, not only that legal sacrifices have been abolished, which is quite true, and that God requires to be worshipped in spirit and in truth, and not with carnal ordinances, which is quite true also; but that the only sacrifice which is pleasing to God, the only sacrifice indeed which the Christian can offer, is the inward sacrifice of the heart. In this, according to them, consists the difference between the Christian and the Jew. The Jewish sacrifice, say they, was only outward; the Christian sac-

riſice is only inward. Here, then, it is that we Catholics join iſſue with them; and maintain, on the contrary, that the Jewish ſacrifice was *not* only outward in the ſenſe they mean, nor the Chriſtian only inward. I will take each point ſeparately.

First, although the Jewish ſacrifices were carnal ſacrifices, inasmuch as the victims offered were literally, of fleſh and blood, bulls, and goats, and other animals, and in themſelves merely external, having no virtue or efficacy in them, yet they were not an acceptable offering to God unleſs they were accompanied with the inward ſacrifice of the heart; humility, obedience, repentance, and the like; ſo that it is not true to ſay that Chriſtian worſhip differs from Jewish in this, that the latter was wholly outward, and the former is wholly inward. What does God Himſelf ſay by the mouth of David? "If Thou haſt deſired ſacrifice, I would indeed have given it; with burnt-offerings Thou wilt not be delighted. A ſacrifice to God is an afflicted ſpirit: a contrite and humbled heart, O God, Thou wilt not deſpiſe" (Ps. l. (Prot. vers. Ps. li.) 18, 19). Again, in the book of Proverbs (xv. 8) we read, "The victims of the wicked are abominable to

the Lord: the vows of the just are acceptable." But it is useless to multiply quotations: at the first giving of the law God had told the Jews the sort of service He required of them, viz. that they should fear Him, and walk in His ways, and love Him, and serve Him with all their heart and with all their soul, and keep His commandments and His ceremonies (Deut. x. 12, 13; compare verse 16). It is vital religion, it is the inward service of the heart, which throughout the old law is described as rendering the worshipper or his sacrifices acceptable in the sight of God. Certainly nothing can be plainer than that it is not this which makes the difference between the Jewish and the Christian religion.

But secondly, the Christian sacrifice is not only inward. If God, when He told the Jew that all He required was "the sacrifice of a humble heart," did not therefore cease to require of him fleshly sacrifices also; neither, when He speaks in a like manner to Christians, does He therefore mean that they have no outward or visible sacrifice to offer to Him. Because God is a spirit, and is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth, it does not therefore follow (as Protestants suppose) that He is not to

be worshipped with outward visible rites and ordinances. If this were so, it would exclude even those meager observances which Protestants have retained. It would exclude the administration of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, the use of forms of prayer, and the very bending of the knee. But as a matter of fact, the Christian Church was to have real sacrifices offered on a real altar by real priests. God by His prophets predicted the abolition of the Jewish sacrifices (and Christ did indeed abolish them); but He announced at the same time the coming in of others, or rather *an* other in their stead. Thus Isaiah declares (xix. 19-21): "In that day there shall be an altar of the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt and the Egyptians shall worship Him with sacrifices and offerings." Here it is expressly declared that the Egyptians, a Gentile people, should have the altar of the Lord among them, and should worship Him with sacrifices and offerings. And again (chap. lxvi.) he foretells how God would cast off the nation of the Jews, and call the Gentiles in their place; and he says that God "will send of them that will be saved to the Gentiles and I will take of them to be priests and Levites, saith the Lord.

For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make to stand before thee, so shall your seed stand and your name" (vers. 19-22). Here again it is declared not only that the Christian Church shall have priests, but that they shall endure as long as the heaven and the earth shall stand. So also the prophet Jeremiah: "Thus saith the Lord, there shall not be cut off from David a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel. Neither shall there be cut off from the priests and Levites a man before My face to offer holocausts and to burn sacrifices, and to kill victims continually" (Jer. xxxiii. 17, 18). These words evidently point to our Blessed Lord and His Church; for the angel Gabriel, when he announced to the Blessed Virgin that she should be mother of Christ, applies them to Him; and they as evidently declare that the priesthood shall never fail, but that in that Church, or kingdom, there shall ever be priests to offer sacrifices continually. Lastly, I will here quote the famous prophecy of Malachi (i. 11), though I shall have to return to it hereafter: "I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts: and I will not receive a gift from your hand. For from the rising of the sun even to the going

down, My name is (or 'shall be,' Prot. vers.) great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My name a clean oblation: for My name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of hosts." Now here two things are clearly foretold: 1. the rejection of the Jewish sacrifices; "I have no pleasure in you, and I will not receive a gift from your hand:" 2. the substitution of a new and better sacrifice in their stead, which was to be offered, not only at Jerusalem, but in every place; "And in every place there is (or shall be) sacrifice and a clean oblation."

Now what are these sacrifices which still are not many but one; one, and yet everywhere offered; offered by priests that serve continually, and yet by one man, the Son of David? The Protestant cannot give any answer which includes and satisfies these seemingly contradictory conditions. For first, he says that the prophecies in question must be understood, in what he calls a spiritual sense; that is, a sense which makes priests not priests, and sacrifices not sacrifices. He says that Christians have no real actual sacrifice, or any sacrificial rite, properly so called; that every true believer is a priest; and his good desires, his prayers, his

praises and thanksgivings, his almsdeeds, in short, all the religious actions of his life are sacrifices, as St. Paul and St. Peter both declare (Rom. xii. 1; Phil. iv. 18; Heb. xii. 16; 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9); and that if the Lord's Supper is a sacrifice, it is so only as being the most solemn act of Christian profession. But the answer is easy: these things are not peculiar to Christians, they were required of Jews; and more than this, they were expressly called sacrifices. Thus (Ps. xlix. 13, 14), "Shall I eat the flesh of bullocks? or shall I drink the blood of goats? Offer to God the sacrifice of praise." Again (Ps. cxl. 2), "Let my prayer be directed as incense in Thy sight; the lifting up of my hands as evening sacrifice." So also the prophet Osee (xiv. 3; compare Heb. xiii. 15), "We will render the calves of our lips;" and again (vi. 6), "I desired mercy and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than holocausts." But if the Jews had actual sacrifices, although acts of religion and mercy were also *called* sacrifices, how can it be any argument against Christians having a true and proper sacrifice, that the same acts should continue to be called by the same name? Such acts are the offerings of the individual soul to God, and derive all their

virtue and merit from that one great Sacrifice which was prefigured by the law and is possessed under the Gospel. In this sense it is that St. Peter calls all Christians priests, and declares that they offer spiritual sacrifices. It is not that there are no priests, properly so called, in the Christian Church; for the very words used by St. Peter are spoken by God Himself to the Jews (Exod. xix. 6), who assuredly had both priests and sacrifices; but that Christians have the great propitiatory Sacrifice among them, and are especially set apart to do His will and declare His praises. They are a "priestly kingdom" just because they have a real priesthood and a real sacrifice.

But secondly, the Protestant says that the prophecies refer to the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross; that the old sacrifices were abolished, and that Christians have no other sacrifice than that which Christ offered of Himself upon the cross. Most true. The old sacrifices were abolished: the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross is the Christian's only sacrifice. But how can the Christian be said to *have* that sacrifice which was offered 1800 years ago? to have it now in present possession, to-day and every day? The sacrifice of the cross was offered on one par-

ticular day, in one place, on Mount Calvary. outside the walls of Jerusalem. But the sacrifice of which the prophets speak was to be offered "among the Gentiles and in every place," not once only, but "continually." If it be answered, that the Christian has it by faith, I reply: So had the Jews, so had the patriarchs; Abel had it by faith; Samuel and David had it by faith. But faith could not give it them as a present possession; and so neither can faith alone give it to the Christian. Any how, on his own showing, the Protestant is in no better condition than was the Jew. Nay, he is plainly in a worse. The Jew, at all events, had the figure of the true Sacrifice: it was all he *could* have before the offering was made: he had that which, by God's appointment, gave him an interest in the Sacrifice that was preparing. But what has the Protestant to connect him with it, but the barren memory of the event? How can he be said to have an interest in an "oblation" which he has no share in "offering?"

In what sense the Catholic possesses the reality, I shall show you in the sequel.

THE HOLY
SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

THE SACRIFICE OF THE ALTAR

ONE AND THE SAME WITH

THE SACRIFICE OF THE CROSS.



NEW YORK:
EDWARD DUNIGAN AND BROTHER,
151 FULTON-STREET, NEAR BROADWAY.



THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

THE SACRIFICE OF THE ALTAR ONE AND THE SAME WITH THE SACRIFICE OF THE CROSS.

FROM the creation of the world sacrifice had formed the chief feature of that religion which God gave to man; the religion of the old world before the Flood, the religion of Noah and his sons, of Melchisedech and Job and Abraham, before God chose this last to be the father of a peculiar people. Sacrifice was no distinctive mark of the Mosaic law; it was universally practised among all the nations of the earth. It was emphatically the worship of God, the worship which God ordained to be rendered to Himself alone. Sacrifice and religion, sacrifice and divine worship, were in effect one and the same thing. Had sacrifice been abolished, the solemn worship of God would have ceased throughout the world; God would no longer

have received the honor due unto His name. Hence, when the Prophets describe the persecution of the Church and the extinction of religion, they speak of the people of God "sitting without sacrifice or altar" (Osee iii. 4); and of the "continual sacrifice" being "taken away" (Dan. xii. 11; compare Matt. xxiv. 15).

Sacrifice was never to cease. Carnal sacrifices indeed, the sacrifices of bulls and goats, were to be done away, but another and a better sacrifice was to come in their stead. This the Prophets foretold in various ways. There was to be a sacrifice essentially pure and holy, which was to supersede all the carnal sacrifices that heretofore had been offered. It was to be celebrated everywhere, all over the world, among all nations; it was to go on continually, and was never to cease as long as the sun and moon should stand.

All this I showed you in my last Number; and at the same time I begged you to observe that Protestants had no such sacrifice; that the very thing had happened to them which the Prophets had mourned over as the destruction of true religion. They had abolished the "continual sacrifice;" they had profaned and desolated God's sanctuary, and now they "sat with-

out sacrifice and altar." Three hundred years ago the people of this country were in the happy enjoyment of God's promises: they had the pure offering, the clean oblation, which Malachi (i. 11) had foretold; they possessed that blessed reality, which the ancient sacrifices could only foreshadow. But their rulers departed from God; they despised the riches of His grace; they disbelieved His word; they lost the light of faith, and did their utmost to rob others of it; they corrupted and deceived the people; they abjured and *protested* against the very privileges which formed their Christian birth-right. Their glory was, not in believing, but in protesting. This was their boast, that they denied what all Catholic Christendom maintained. They declared that they had no sacrifice; that they would have no sacrifice; that there was none to have. Hard pressed by the arguments of the champions of the ancient faith, they were obliged, in self-defence, to look about for something to say in support of their new opinions;* and so they pretended that the

* Martin Luther, who may be called the founder of Protestantism, actually declares that it was the devil who induced him to give up the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. He says, in one of his own books, *De Missa Privata*, that Satan appeared to him at midnight, and plied him with such strong arguments, that

THE SACRIFICE OF THE ALTAR

Catholic Church taught what it did not teach, and that Scripture meant what it did not mean. This it became easier to do as time went on, and generations grew up which had never been instructed in the Catholic religion; the very teachers became themselves deceived through the blind following of their fathers. However, first to misstate the Catholic doctrine, and then to prove it contrary to Scripture, was, as you must allow, easy enough; and as Scripture must mean something, it was not difficult to substitute another doctrine which seemed to answer to this text and that, taken by themselves; a doctrine too which, may be, had some sort of truth about it, and in itself might even be good and right.

And so it is at this very day. Does the Catholic maintain that the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is a true and proper sacrifice; that it is that "clean oblation" which was to be "offered in every place;" that it is Christ Himself who is offered; that the bread is not bread, and the wine is not wine, but that they are changed by

he became convinced that the Catholic doctrine was false, and the worship of the Mass idolatry. Zwingli also, another head Reformer, professes to have learnt his main argument against the Mass from some spirit, whether black or white he could not say, which visited him by night.

His almighty power, according to His own institution and promise, into His Body and Blood, which are thus offered on the altar and consumed sacramentally by the priest; the Protestant exclaims, There is but one sacrifice, and it is the sacrifice of the cross. In vain does the Catholic calmly beg him to consider what he means by saying that there is but one sacrifice, when the sacrifice he speaks of is past and over; that he cannot be said to have a sacrifice now in present possession which was finished, consummated, more than 1800 years ago; he opens his Bible, and points triumphantly to the text: "This Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down on the right hand of God." And then taking up the words which his teachers have put into his mouth, he inveighs against the Catholic doctrine as disparaging the great propitiatory sacrifice which Christ made of Himself on the cross, as though it were insufficient and void of all present efficacy, as though Christ had to offer Himself many times, and His sacrifice were of no more real or lasting effect than the sacrifices of the law. If the sacrifice of the cross were sufficient, he asks, what need of further sacrifice? Must Christ be crucified over and over again? Must

He offer Himself continually, and in every nation of the earth? Was not the sacrifice on Calvary a perfect and sufficient sacrifice? What says the Scripture? And then he repeats a series of texts, all concurring, as he imagines, to prove the Protestant doctrine, and to overthrow the Catholic.

Listen, he says: you pretend that Christ offers Himself continually, again and again, by the hands of priests, who "stand daily ministering." Scripture says the very contrary; it declares (Heb. vii. 26, 27) that "we have a High Priest who needeth not daily, as those (Jewish) high-priests, to offer up sacrifice; for this He did once when He offered up Himself." And again: "Every priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down on the right hand of God" (x. 11, 12). You say that though Christ is gone up into heaven, yet He descends again and again upon the altar, and there sacrifices Himself afresh by the hands of priests. Scripture says the very contrary; it declares (ix. 12, 25) that "He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us;" "not that

He should offer Himself often, as the high-priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now once, in the end of the world, hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." You say that Christ is offered continually in the Mass, and that the Mass is a propitiatory sacrifice for sin. Scripture says the very contrary; it declares (ix. 28) that "Christ was *once* offered to bear the sins of many;" and (x. 18) that "there is no more offering for sin." Can words speak more plainly? How is it possible, he confidently asks, to resist or to evade such testimony as this? The Catholic doctrine manifestly contradicts the express declarations of God's Word.

You must be curious to know what answer the Catholic can have to give to statements so positive, and reasoning apparently so convincing as this. Perhaps, then, it may surprise you to learn that he also takes the words of holy Scripture in their plain and literal sense. Yet so it is: he holds it as a fundamental article of his faith, which it would be mortal sin in him to deny, that Jesus Christ, by the one sacrifice of Himself once offered on the cross, made a

full, perfect, and sufficient satisfaction for the sins of the whole world; that no more sacrifice for sins is needed; and that they who sin can have their sin remitted only in virtue of the one oblation of Christ's death, and by the washing of His Blood. But he does not the less hold that Jesus Christ offers Himself daily on the altar by the hands of His priests, and that this offering of Himself is not only a true and proper sacrifice, but a propitiatory sacrifice. The Catholic holds both these propositions. Neither are they contradictory one to the other, when rightly understood. The truth is, that the Protestant does not rightly understand the Catholic doctrine; he thinks that it is what it is not; he thinks that it goes against Scripture, because he misinterprets Scripture. The Protestant holds only half a doctrine; and not holding the other half, he cannot be said to hold what he thinks he holds. But anyhow the Protestant sees but half a truth; and therefore that appears to him a contradiction which is really none at all. Hence his reasoning is all beside the mark. Suppose, for instance, a Socinian, who denies that our Lord is truly God, were to bring forward a number of texts which went to show that our Lord was truly man, we

should say to him: All this we assent to; Christ is truly man; but because He is truly man, it does not therefore follow that He is not also truly God. There is no opposition between the two: He is the God-Man, God *and* man. It is true to say of Him, what of any one else it were a self-contradiction to say, that He died, and that He did not die and could not die; because in the one case we speak of Him as He is man; in the other, as He is God. Well, in like manner, it is true to say of Christ, in one sense, that He offered Himself once only; and in another, that He offers Himself often, continually, daily. The one is true of Him as respects the cross, the other as respects the altar; because He offered Himself for one end and in one manner on the cross; and He continues to offer Himself for another end and in another manner on the altar. This I will now explain in such a way as, I trust, will make it plain to you that the Catholic doctrine neither contradicts itself, nor is opposed to holy Scripture.

Let us consider the texts that have been quoted a little more closely. The Apostle, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, is insisting upon the superiority of the Christian dispensation to the Jewish. He is proving that the Jewish

dispensation was a temporary one; that it was to pass away; that it looked to Christ, and was to be fulfilled in Him. The Jews thought that it was to last forever; and many even of the Jewish converts to Christianity were disposed to believe that the old legal sacrifices were to continue in the Christian Church. Throughout this Epistle, therefore, St. Paul is speaking against *Jewish* sacrifices, the sacrifices of the law, and those only. He is contrasting the sacrifice of Christ with the sacrifices of the law, and he declares that the sacrifices of the law had no power in them to take away sin; that they had to be continually repeated, and were ineffectual after all; that they were many and various, and each and all insufficient—they could accomplish nothing; they were but shadows and predictions of the sacrifice which Christ was to offer once and forever. But what is the meaning of this word “once?” To what does it relate? What is it that Christ was to do but once? The whole question hangs on this. He was to die but once, to suffer but once. He was to offer Himself in a bloody manner but once. He was to redeem us but once; to make atonement for sin, to make satisfaction to God’s justice, but once. When He entered into heav-

en He had finished the work He came to do: it was a perfect work; nothing was wanting to it. The redemption He obtained was an "eternal redemption." The sacrifice of the cross was never to be repeated. It was sufficient in itself to take away the sins of ten thousand worlds. There was no need of further remission of sin: Christ had "put away sin"—"destroyed sin by the sacrifice of Himself." The value of that sacrifice was infinite. If sin were remitted, it was for its sake, by its virtue and merit. If the soul was cleansed and sanctified, it was through the grace that flowed from the cross. "The Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin" (1 John. i. 7).

But you may say, If the work of redemption was a perfect work, and if the sacrifice once offered was a perfect and sufficient sacrifice, what more has to be done? What further sacrifice is needed? I answer, Christ did indeed offer Himself once for all upon the Cross, and His sacrifice was a perfect and sufficient sacrifice; but how are Christians to have a part in it? How are we, for instance, who live more than 1800 years after the death of Christ, to receive any present benefit from it? How is it to be brought near to us, or we to it? It is

not enough that the sacrifice has been offered so many years ago; its effects must be applied to our souls, in order that we may ourselves have part in the redemption purchased for us? Now, did it ever occur to you to think what Christ is doing at this present time? He is in heaven, you will say, interceding for us. True; but what do you mean by His interceding? Do you think that Christ is only praying for us, as any holy man might do, before the throne of God? (Rom. xi. 2; James v. 16, 17.) He was our Intercessor all the time He abode on earth, —all the time He went in and out and ministered to men. He interceded for His Church on the night before His passion; He interceded for His murderers when He hung upon the cross: what, then, is He doing now in heaven? What is His office there? *He is a priest.* Yes; Christ is our priest in heaven. He not only *was* our priest when He offered Himself on the cross; but He *is* our priest still, now that He has entered into heaven. St. Paul says, “we *have* a great high-priest that hath passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God” (Heb. iv. 14). In the old Jewish law the high-priest entered into the holy of holies, the inner and most sacred part of the temple, “once every

year" (ix. 7), taking with him the blood of the victim he had slain, with which he also sprinkled and purified the sanctuary. The victim was slain without, the blood was taken into the sanctuary, and there it was "offered" for the sins of the people. All this was typical of what Christ was to do. Christ was slain and offered on the cross; thus did He fulfil what the high-priest did outside the sanctuary. But He fulfilled also the other part of the high-priest's office by entering into heaven on Ascension-day; and not only so, but what the high-priest did within the sanctuary, that Christ is doing now. He fulfils in reality what the high-priest did in figure. He is "within the veil" (vi. 19), "not in the holy places made with hands, but in heaven itself," "in the presence of God" (ix. 24); there He still abides; there He still performs for us the office of a priest; nor will He cease from His office until the end come, until "He appear the second time without sin," no more to offer Himself for sin, but "unto salvation," the salvation of all "who look for Him" (ver. 28). St. Paul declares with David (Ps. cix. 4), that Christ is "a priest *forever*" (Heb. v. 6, &c.); that the Jewish priests were always passing away "by reason of death;" but that

"He continueth *forever*," and therefore "hath an *everlasting* priesthood," "an unchangeable priesthood," that "passeth not from one to another" (vii. 23, 24).

Thus Christ is our priest *now* in heaven. He does not merely pray for us, which is the only idea Protestants seem to have of His intercession: He is performing some portion of His priestly office. His priesthood is a present reality. His intercession at God's right hand is as real a work, as real a part of the dispensation of salvation, as His death upon the cross. He does not indeed offer Himself *as* He offered Himself once upon the cross, nor as every day, day after day, the priest offered the "blood of bulls and goats," and every year, year after year, the high-priest slew the accustomed victims, and so entered again and again into the sanctuary through the veil. He suffered once, and He ascended once; but He continues in heaven to offer the Blood which once for all He shed upon the cross. He is our high-priest, the "minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle," not the earthly one which "man" pitched, but the heavenly "which the Lord pitched" (viii. 2, 3); and He continues, and will continue to the end of time, to perform the

office of a high-priest for us. Hence St. Paul declares, that we have the real "sprinkling of blood" (xii. 24.) He reminds us that that blood, unlike "the blood of goats and calves" which the Jewish high-priest took with him into the sanctuary, is able to "purge the conscience" (ix. 13, 14); and bids us "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith" (x. 22). Christ, then, as our high-priest, "offers" His blood within the veil; and this offering, the Apostle intimates, is, in some sense, a sacrifice. He says (viii. 3), "Every high-priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices; wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer," somewhat also in the way of "gifts and sacrifices;" and yet he is speaking of Christ, not as He was on the cross, or "in the days of His flesh," but as He is now, "sitting on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" (ver. 1). Again, still speaking of His entrance into heaven, he says, that, as "it was necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens"—that is, the material Jewish tabernacle and its vessels—"should be purified with" "the blood of calves and goats," &c., so it was necessary that "the heavenly things themselves," the things foreshadowed by the Jewish

"patterns," the realities now enjoyed in the Christian Church, should be purified "with better sacrifices" (ix. 23). He calls that which is offered within the veil a sacrifice, and so teaches us that sacrifices of some sort there still are in the Christian Church.

Some offering, or sacrifice of Himself, therefore, Christ does still make; and this alone is sufficient to remove the Protestant objection, and so far to establish the Catholic doctrine. It shows, that when St. Paul speaks of "one offering," he means us to exclude only a *bloody* offering, and not such offering as Christ makes of Himself since He has ascended into heaven. Indeed, the very principle of the objection is destroyed when once it is acknowledged that Christ is still acting as our priest, and, in some way or other, offers Himself continually for us. Whether He offers Himself in heaven or on earth is nothing to the point; that He should offer Himself at all, and in any sense, is directly opposed to the Protestant interpretation of Scripture. However, notices are not wanting even in this same Epistle as to this offering being made, not only in heaven, but on earth also.

In the first place, St. Paul says expressly,

that "*we have an altar*" (xiii. 10); that in the Christian Church there is an altar, "*whereof*," he adds, "*they who serve the tabernacle*"—that is, the Jewish priests and people—"have no power to eat." The altar of which he speaks is, therefore, one whereof *we* have power to eat. It is an altar of communion; it is the same altar at which we communicate. In his first Epistle to the Corinthians (in a passage which I shall discuss more fully in my next), the Apostle uses similar language, and there he is evidently speaking of the Holy Eucharist. He calls "*the chalice of benediction*" (the "*cup of blessing*," Prot. version), "*the communion of the Blood of Christ*;" and "*the bread*," "*the communion*," or "*the partaking*" "*of the Body of Christ*." Christians, he says, are "*partakers of that one bread*," as Jews who "*ate of the sacrifices*" were "*partakers of the altar*" (x. 16-18). Thus, to "*eat*" or "*partake of the altar*" is to "*eat of the sacrifices*;" and to "*eat of the altar*" is to "*partake of that one bread*," or to "*partake of the Body of Christ*." The Jews partook of carnal sacrifices, the flesh of bulls and goats; Christians partake of a spiritual sacrifice, the flesh of Jesus Christ really but sacramentally received under the appearance of bread. A

comparison of the two passages shows clearly, that when St. Paul says, "We have an altar," he means a real altar,* the altar on which the Body of Christ is offered, and at which it is sacramentally "*eaten*."

But the Apostle does more than allude to the sacrifice of the altar, he implies it throughout. You will observe that Christ is said to be, not only "a priest forever," but "a priest forever *according to the order of Melchisedech*." Now, in what did the priesthood of Melchisedech differ from that of other priests? The difference was twofold. First, he stands alone, "without father, without mother, without descent," or "pedigree" (vii. 3). Scripture does not record his genealogy or parentage; he does not come of any priestly line; he is preceded by none

* A few verses on, the Apostle says: "By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually; that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. But to do good and to communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased;" from which the Protestant infers, that the only sacrifices the Christian has to offer are those of praise and mercy. The fallacy of this inference I showed in my last Number, from the fact that the same admonitions were addressed to the Jews, who, nevertheless, were bound to offer literal sacrifices. It is much more natural to believe that St. Paul here uses the term "sacrifices" by a figure of speech, suggested to him by his previous mention of the "altar" of communion, and the "blood" of sanctification (ver. 12).

other, followed by none other. Secondly, the only sacrifice he offered was a sacrifice of bread and wine: he "brought forth bread and wine, for he was the priest of the most high God" (Gen. xiv. 18). This indeed it is which is most singular in him. Though he differed from Aaron in *all* these particulars, yet of Abel it may be said that he had no successors; of Job and Elias, that their parentage are not recorded; of no one, however, can it be said that his only sacrifice was one of bread and wine. Bread and wine, it is true, were offered in sacrifice by the Jewish priests, but not in their simple state; they were offered with other things, as adjuncts to other sacrifices, never both together or by themselves; of no other sacrifice could it be said that it was a sacrifice of bread and wine. The Jewish sacrifices were especially bloody sacrifices; the sacrifice of Melchisedech was especially an unbloody one; and the matter of it was simple bread and wine. Now, when did Christ offer such a sacrifice? Not on the cross, for then He offered Himself in a bloody manner; then He shed for us the last drop of His blood. Not on the cross, for the sacrifice He there offered was once for all; He suffered but once; He shed His blood but once; whereas

the priesthood of Melchisedech is a continual priesthood. Christ is "a priest *forever* according to the order of Melchisedech." The only sacrifice which corresponds therewith, is the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. This, externally at least, is an offering of bread and wine; it is offered continually, and will never cease to be offered as long as the world endures. Christ offered it first of all on the night of His betrayal, and He continues to offer it by the hands of His priests, whom He commanded to do as He did in remembrance of Him.

If you ask me why St. Paul did not enlarge more upon the sacrifice of the altar, I answer, that it was not the subject of his Epistle. He was writing to Jewish Christians with a special view to such Jews as were *not* Christians; and his object was to show them that the priesthood of Christ had succeeded to, and had abolished, the priesthood of Aaron; that Christ was the true Melchisedech who "continueth a priest forever" (vii. 3); that He had entered into heaven, the true tabernacle; and that they must draw near unto Him, if they would be cleansed from their sins and be sanctified unto perfection. He expressly declares that he has "much" or "many things to say" of Melchise-

deh which were "hard to be intelligibly uttered," because they were "dull of hearing" (v. 11); by which we may understand him to mean, that it would have been unseasonable and useless to write to them at length on the great Eucharistic Sacrifice, until they were well grounded in "the first principles of the doctrine of Christ" (ver. 12), and thoroughly understood the temporary nature of the Jewish law, as taught them in this Epistle. Besides, the very fact that Christ was still a priest would be enough to show them that He offered some sort of sacrifice; for the office of a priest was to offer sacrifices, and the Jews could conceive of no religion without a sacrifice; in their minds, as indeed in those of all mankind, sacrifice was involved in the very notion of religion. That St. Paul, therefore, should have made no special mention of the Christian sacrifice, is no argument against the truth of the Catholic doctrine. Nothing is said in the New Testament, except incidentally and by implication, of the duty of public worship, or of observing holy days, not even one day in seven; but the Protestant does not, therefore, reject such observances; he considers them as virtually enjoined because never expressly done away. On the Protestant, there-

fore, lies the burden of proving that the Christian religion has no sacrifice; of proving it too by the express words of Holy Scripture, for that he professes to regard as his only rule of faith. The Catholic does not hold that every doctrine of Christ is on the surface of Scripture, or indeed, of necessity, in Scripture at all, except by implication. The Church of Christ is his teacher as to what is the doctrine of Christ; and that Church has ever taught that there is a sacrifice, and that the Holy Mass is that sacrifice. Any how, all that I am concerned to prove is, that the doctrine of the Christian sacrifice is not *opposed* to Scripture; though in fact I have done more, for I have shown you that it is implied even in passages which Protestants think tell the other way.

Another point remains to be explained. St. Paul says, that in the Jewish Church there were "many priests," but that now there is but one, who "continueth ever, and hath an unchangeable priesthood" (vii. 23, 24). If, then, Christ is our only priest, and He is in heaven, how is it that there are priests still in the Church on earth? I answer, Christ is our only priest, and yet there are priests in the Christian Church: nor does this involve any contradic-

tion; for the priests of the Church are but the ministers and representatives of Christ: they act for Christ, and Christ acts by them. The priesthood of Christ is an everlasting priesthood: in the Jewish Church one priest succeeded another, and all in their degree were equal one with another. Eleazar succeeded to Aaron in the office of high-priest; and his priesthood was of the same order and dignity as Aaron's; but no one has succeeded to Christ. St. Peter was Christ's servant and vicar, not His successor; and so to this day the Pope is the servant and vicar of Christ; but the successor, not of Christ, but of St. Peter. The Jewish priests were but types and shadows of Christ; their acts *prefigured* His acts; but the priests of the Catholic Church are His ministers and agents, His organs and instruments; their acts *are* really His acts. So that it is equally true to say that the priests of the Church offer Christ in the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, or that Christ offers Himself by their hands. He remains in heaven, and yet in His omnipotence He descends upon the altars of the Church, and there really, but mystically and in a way that passes understanding, He offers Himself in sacrifice without shedding of blood. The priests of the

Church do not act in their own name, nor in deed do they do their own acts: they represent, and in a manner personify, Christ. Therefore it is, that in the words of consecration, at the moment when the great change is wrought, and the natural elements of bread and wine become substantially the Body and Blood of Christ, they say, *Hoc est Corpus Meum. Hic est calix Sanguinis Mei.* Not "This is the Body of Christ," but "This is *My* Body;" not "This is the chalice of Christ's Blood," but "This is the chalice of *My* Blood." They speak and act in the name and person of Christ.

Now, if you reflect, you will see that all that has been said is but another way of expressing this great Catholic doctrine (which I have put as the title of my present Number), that the sacrifice of the altar is one and the same sacrifice with that of the cross. The victim is one and the same, the priest is one and the same, Jesus Christ our Lord. The sacrifice is not another or a different sacrifice to that of the cross; it is the same sacrifice renewed. The Jewish high-priest did not slay any fresh victim within the veil of the sanctuary; he carried with him the blood of the victim that had been slain without, and then offered it (as it is written)

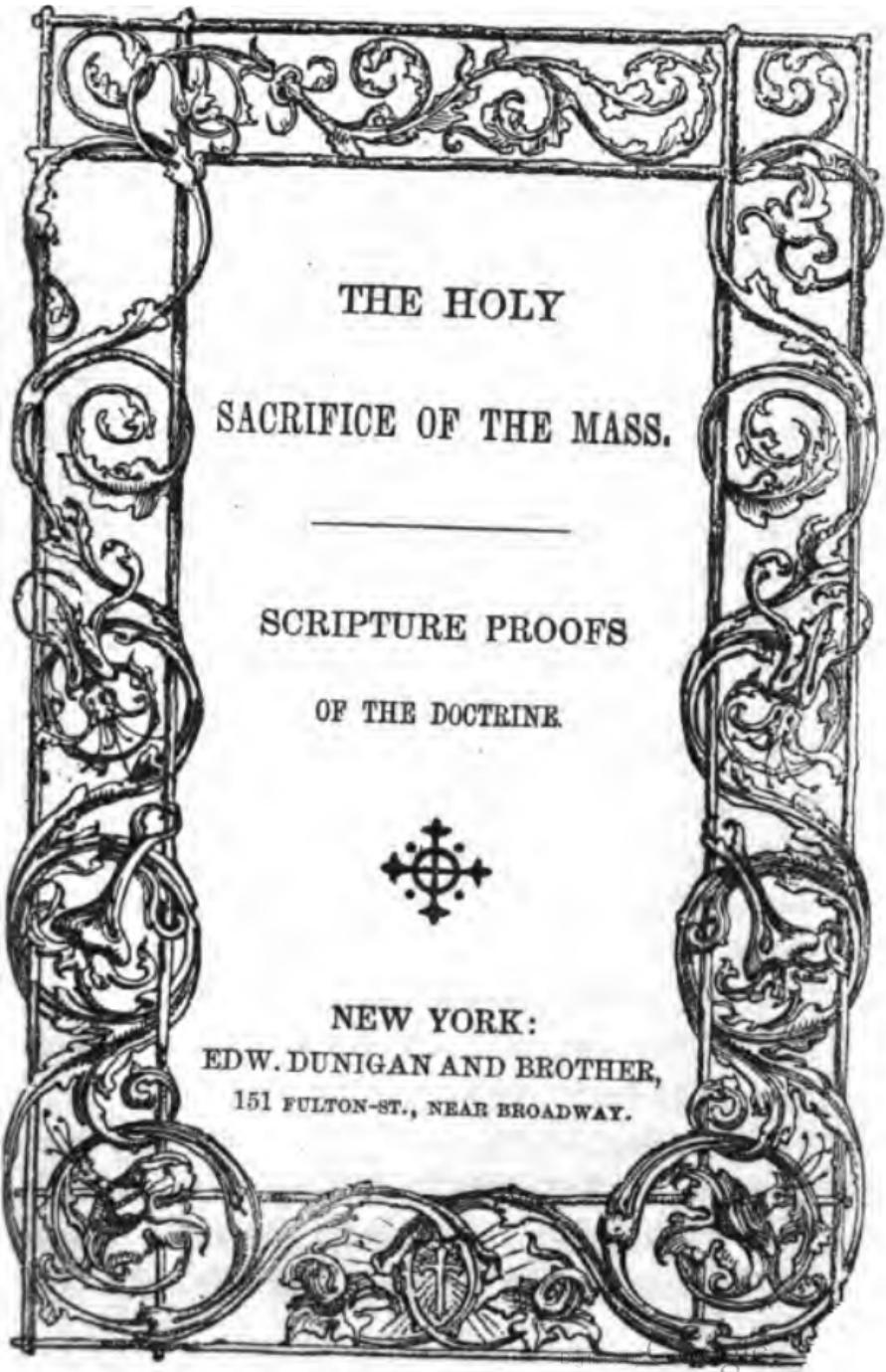
“to accomplish the atonement” (Lev. xvi. 27). And so likewise, Christ does not die again upon the altar; He is not sacrificed afresh after a bloody manner, by suffering and being slain; He does not perform over again the sacrifice of the cross, so as really to die and shed His blood afresh; He does not again redeem the world; He does not again satisfy for sin; but the sacrifice which He made once for all upon the cross, He continually renews in an unbloody manner on the altar.

The sacrifice is one and the same. First offered in the institution of the Holy Eucharist, and then consummated on the cross, it is perpetuated before the mercy-seat in heaven, and on the altars of the Church on earth. Offered daily, in successive acts, by priests continually succeeding one another unto the end of time, it is still one sacrifice, even as Christ Himself, who offers it, is one.

Thus the sacrifice of Christ becomes to us, not a mere event in history, which took place more than eighteen hundred years ago, but a very present reality. It is consummated, as it were, in the midst of us, yet without shedding of blood; it is commemorated continually, yet so commemorated as to be really that which is

commemorated, after an unbloody manner. The sacrifice of the cross was of infinite value ; its efficacy endures through all ages ; its effects can never be exhausted ; its merits are applied to us as in many ways, so especially in the sacrifice of the altar ; we have thereby a very present and personal interest in it. So far, therefore, from the sacrifice of the altar arguing, as Protestants suppose, any insufficiency in the sacrifice of the cross, it, on the contrary, supposes, and indeed demonstrates, it to be of infinite merit and inexhaustible virtue ; inasmuch as it is capable of being drawn upon and renewed daily on a thousand altars, and applied to the remission of sins and the sanctification of souls as long as the world shall last. Herein is fulfilled, as if before our eyes, that word of the Apostle, " We are sanctified by the oblation of the body of Jesus Christ once [for all]. By one oblation He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified" (Heb. x. 10, 14). The oblation once offered on the cross is that by which we are sanctified unto perfection. As many as are sanctified, as many as are perfected, owe their sanctification and perfection to the oblation which Christ once offered on the cross. The cross is the source from which all sanctifi-

cation flows. It is an inexhaustible fountain of grace. The sacrifice of the altar is not a distinct and separate sacrifice from that of the cross. It is not as if the sacrifice of the cross came first in order, and after it came other sacrifices, differing from the first, and each in itself a distinct and separate sacrifice. As Christ has no successor in His priesthood, but is Himself our priest forever, although in His Church on earth He acts by means of others; so the sacrifice He offered on the cross is not succeeded by other sacrifices, but is itself continued and renewed, after an unbloody manner, on the altar.



THE HOLY
SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

SCRIPTURE PROOFS
OF THE DOCTRINE.



NEW YORK:
EDW. DUNIGAN AND BROTHER,
151 FULTON-ST., NEAR BROADWAY.

THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

SCRIPTURE PROOFS OF THE DOCTRINE.

IN this Tract I shall continue to give you some of the Scripture proofs of the doctrine of the Mass; and in doing so, I shall at the same time more clearly explain what that doctrine is. This method, however, seems to call for some preliminary remarks, lest I should appear to be using the Bible as the Protestant uses it.

The Protestant professes to derive his belief from Scripture alone. He makes two assumptions: first, that Holy Scripture was *intended* to teach him his religion; and secondly, that, as a matter of fact, he *is* so taught. The Catholic, on the contrary, declares that the Church, and not the Bible, is the appointed teacher; and that, as a matter of fact, no one is taught by his Bible; but that if a person is not taught by the Church, he learns his religion from

teachers of some other kind. And certainly, as respects the first assumption, that the Bible is the intended teacher of mankind, one would have thought it sufficient to remind people of the fact: 1. That it never itself professes to be such a teacher. 2. That it never has been such a teacher. The Jews were not left to the study of their sacred books; they were bound to hear and obey their Church: the world was evangelized by preachers, not by "Scripture-readers," or by each man reading the Bible for himself. The Bible was written in a language understood by a very small proportion of mankind, and was not even collected into a volume till a large part of the world had embraced the faith; *written*, and therefore, from the nature of the case, inaccessible to the multitude for hundreds of years, till printing was invented, and then only to those who were able to read. 3. That Protestants themselves practically do not, and cannot, use it as a teacher. There is not a single subject they may name on which the Bible provides them with a continuous line of plain instruction, such as they can put into the hands of those whom they wish to teach the Christian religion; they cannot take the Bible as it stands; they have to break it up into bits,

to bring a piece from this quarter and a piece from that; they have to make a selection of texts; they cannot trust the Bible to be its own interpreter; they add their own notes and comments; and, in short, are obliged themselves to be the teachers, instead of letting the Bible speak for itself.

The second assumption is therefore palpably untrue. No one really learns his religion from the Bible: as a matter of fact, he is taught it by his parents, or other instructors, and by the ministers of the persuasion to which they belong; or if he be left without religious instruction properly so called, he picks up such religious notions as he possesses from the people amongst whom he lives. Even supposing him to remain ignorant of any thing like religion until his intellectual faculties are matured, still, *whenever* he takes up any religious belief, he does not gather it from the Bible; on the contrary, whenever he goes to the Bible, he does so with a mind biased and preoccupied in favor of certain opinions, and with a prejudice against others. Neither is he left alone to study the Bible for himself, by the sole help of God's Holy Spirit, when once he has access to it; which, nevertheless, is what every good Prot-

estant declares to be the only divinely-ordained method of learning the truth. No ; he hears sermons, he talks with friends, he reads religious books ; and if he does not study any regular commentary, that is, notes upon and explanations of Holy Scripture, it is quite plain, that as he learnt his religion from man in the first instance, so the agency and the influence of man have very considerably to do with the religious opinions which he continues to hold, and the interpretation which he puts upon the Bible. As a matter of fact, then, the theory of Protestants does not hold good. The Bible is not the foundation of their religious belief. The Bible is not their teacher. No Protestant goes to the Bible as to that which is to *reveal* to him something of which he knew nothing before : he goes in order to confirm or to test by it what he already believes. His belief is derived, both in its first and in its last resort, not from the Bible, not from the Word of God, but from some other source which he considers, at least, to be merely human.

The Catholic theory alone is really consistent with itself, with reason, and with facts. It cannot be denied that mankind derive their religious ideas from society—from parents, and

SCRIPTURE PROOFS.

teachers, and rulers, and the social community at large. This is one of the laws of our nature, or rather of the God who is the author of our nature, and of the laws by which it is governed. This being so, God never left men to themselves; from the first He instituted a society with rulers and teachers, whose office it should be to instruct men in the truth, to educate them in the truth, to bias and prejudice their minds in favor of the truth. This society is the Church: it is a *divine* society; so that whoever is taught by this society is taught, not by man, but by God. The Church is the authorized teacher of religion, and to this end is divinely withheld from falling into error or from teaching any thing but the truth. The Bible is an inspired book, or rather a collection of inspired books, and all that is contained therein is therefore infallibly true; but it was not designed to *teach* men the truth. The Church is their teacher; and they who have received in faith the doctrine of the Church, and are thoroughly grounded therein, find what they have been taught by the Church, the divine society, most wonderfully confirmed in the Bible, the divine book. The Protestant may find individual texts which, taken alone, seem to justify the

views afloat in his own sect or in the world about him; but the *whole* Bible, in all its parts, perfectly harmonizes and corresponds only with the teaching of the Catholic Church.

We have had a specimen of this in the doctrine of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Certain expressions used by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Hebrews, torn from their context and wrested from their meaning by the violence of private interpretation, seemed to be opposed to this doctrine; whereas, when read in connection with the general argument of the Epistle, and in the light of the Church's teaching, they were found, though directed immediately to another end, plainly to imply that doctrine, and to receive their full meaning only by supposing its truth. The result was the same in the case of the prophecies quoted in my first Number. Protestantism was found unable to supply any one consistent interpretation which covered them all. It says this for one text or part of a text, and that for another: it cannot give any one doctrine which fits every text and part of a text. This I shall continue to show you by a general comparison of one passage of Scripture with another.

We have seen that from the beginning sacri-

fice was the principal and the essential act of divine worship. Neither do we find it anywhere written in Scripture that sacrifice was to cease; on the contrary, we find it expressly stated that it was to continue as long as the world should endure. Not Jews only, but Gentiles, were to have "priests and Levites" and "the altar of the Lord" among them;* and though Jewish sacrifices, sacrifices of bulls and goats, were to be done away, yet in their stead was to be offered continually a "clean oblation," not in one nation only, but "in every place among the Gentiles." We have seen also that Christ, the Son of David, was to be "a priest according to the order of Melchisedech," and that He was to remain such "*forever*," that is to say, in perpetuity. His priesthood was not to pass from Him; He was to continue to act as our priest until He appeared in His glory at the end of the world. He was to act by and through the priests of His Church, who are not His successors, but His ministers and agents. Thus it is true that Christ is our only priest, and as true also that the priests of the Church are really priests. So again it is true that there is but one sacrifice and one oblation, and as

* See Tract, "Sacrifice the Highest Act of Worship," p. 25.

HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

true also that every Mass that is said is a real sacrifice and a real oblation ; because the sacrifice once offered on the Cross is continued in an unbloody manner on the altar.

Thus even the bloody sacrifices of the law were typical, not only of the sacrifice of the Cross, but also of the sacrifice of the altar : for, as we have seen, these bloody sacrifices were to be succeeded by other sacrifices, which were to be offered "*continually*," whereas the sacrifice of the Cross was offered only once. Again : the sacrifices of the law, except when offered as holocausts, were partly eaten by the priests and people ; but Christ, who, besides being our Holocaust, is also our Sin-offering, our Peace-offering, and our Thank-offering, did not give His flesh to be our food when He hung upon the cross. They were typical, therefore, of something further, that is to say, of the sacrifice of the Mass, in which Christ is "eaten," as well as offered, after a heavenly manner. Hereby the sacrifices of the law are fulfilled perfectly and in every particular. The Victim is the same on the altar as on the cross : the substance of the sacrifice is the same, the only difference being the manner in which it is offered.

But this manner also is the subject of prophecy. Christ was to be "a priest according to the order of Melchisedech," not of Aaron. Aaron was indeed a type of Christ, as was also Melchisedech; but in his office of priest Christ was to resemble, not Aaron, but Melchisedech. Aaron's sacrifice, as also Melchisedech's, was a type of Christ's; but they differed in this, that the one offered bulls and goats, and the other bread and wine. It may be said, however, that on the occasion on which we read of Melchisedech in Scripture, we do not find it stated that he offered sacrifice. I answer, we do not indeed find the *word* sacrifice, but it does not therefore follow that we do not find the *thing*. Remember what I said just now: the interpretation of Holy Scripture is a very different thing from text-quoting. The Catholic Church does the former; Protestantism attempts only the latter. Let us see, then, what meaning the passage in question (Gen. xiv. 18-24) naturally bears. Without entering into any learned disquisitions unsuited to these pages, I may say, 1. That though the word sacrifice is not used, the term here rendered "*bringing forth* bread and wine" is that which is used in other places with reference to sacrifice. 2. That the original

shows that Melchisedech is called "the *priest* of the most high God" in connection with his bringing forth bread and wine, and not with what follows of his "blessing" Abraham; neither, indeed, was the act of blessing peculiar to the priestly office, for, as St. Paul argues (Heb. vii. 7), it was usual for a superior to bless an inferior. 3. That it was not by way of mere refreshment to Abraham and his servants that Melchisedech brought forth bread and wine, for it is expressly stated (verse 24) that they had already eaten: it remains, then, that they must have been "brought forth" for sacrifice.

When Christ came, then, He was to be a priest after Melchisedech's pattern, and not after Aaron's. He was not to be a priest *such as* Melchisedech was, who offered *merely* bread and wine, any more than He was to be a priest *such as* Aaron was, who offered bulls and goats; but He was to be a priest according to—observe, not *of*, but *according to*—the order of Melchisedech, and not of Aaron. Both were *types* of Christ; but the *order* according to which Christ was to be a priest was not Aaron's, but Melchisedech's. When Christ offered Himself on the Cross, the sacrifice He then made of Himself was a fulfilment, as has been said,

of the bloody sacrifices of Aaron : it was not a sacrifice "according to the order" of Aaron (for Christ was not Himself a priest according to the order of Aaron), neither was it according to the order of Melchisedech. But there is no contradiction in this ; for when Christ is said to be "a priest according to the order of Melchisedech," there are always added the words "*forever.*" It is His continual priesthood ; it is the perpetual sacrifice which was to be like that of Melchisedech's, and not the sacrifice which He offered once upon the Cross.

As Melchisedech, therefore, offered bread and wine, so Christ was to offer, and to continue to offer, what, at least in appearance, is bread and wine. In appearance, I say ; for what He really offers in the Mass, though it looks like bread and wine, and indeed retains the properties, the *accidents*, as they are called, of bread and wine, is not really any thing earthly, but in *substance* is the Body and the Blood of Christ. Neither here, again, is there any confusion of idea ; for, as I said just now, Christ was to be, not *of* Melchisedech's order, but *according to* it. Christ was to offer, not the *same* sacrifice that Melchisedech offered, but a sacrifice (externally) resembling it. Melchise-

dech's sacrifice was not the reality, but a representation of the reality. In the Mass we have the substance, of which Melchisedech's sacrifice was the shadow.

The prophecy of Malachi (i. 11), as interpreted by the Church, throws still greater light on the Catholic doctrine of the Mass. In my first Number I showed you how the "pure offering" or "clean oblation" of which it speaks could not be the sacrifice of the Cross, which was offered only once, in one place, at Jerusalem, and not continually and everywhere among the Gentiles. This oblation was to supersede and come in the place of the legal sacrifices; but these sacrifices were the chief religious ordinances of the Jewish Church, and indeed constituted the supreme worship due to God alone: therefore, also, the oblation which superseded them was to be a religious ordinance, and to constitute the supreme worship with which God should be honored at some future time, which future time is acknowledged on all hands to be the time of Christ and the Christian Church. That this "oblation" is a true and proper sacrifice, is plain by a comparison of one part of the prophecy with another. God is reproaching, not the Jewish people

generally, but the priests, with offering Him unworthy offerings, and such as were forbidden by the law; sacrificing to Him victims that were blemished and imperfect, "the blind, the lame, and the sick" (ver. 8, compare v. 14); and these, again, acquired by "rapine" and extortion (ver. 13, compare ver. 10). He declares that He "hath no pleasure in them, and will not receive a gift of their hand;" that in their stead the Gentiles shall offer Him a "clean oblation," and that His "Name shall be great among" them. This oblation he says (iii. 8, 4) shall be offered Him by a priesthood whom He will "purify and refine," and they shall offer Him "sacrifices in justice" ("an offering in righteousness," Protestant version); and these sacrifices shall be "pleasing" to Him. If, then, the first priests, whom He reproaches, are real priests, which undoubtedly they are, the second, whom He declares He will "purify," are real priests also, the priests of the Christian Church; and the sacrifice—that is to say, the "clean oblation"—which they offer, is a real sacrifice. Observe, then, how perfectly this interpretation satisfies all the terms of the prophecy. The word (*minchah*) in the original, which is rendered offering (or oblation) and sacrifice, is a peculiar

word: it is the word employed to denote the unbloody sacrifice of fine flour in the Jewish law (Lev. ii.). It is called a "pure" or "clean" minchah, in contradistinction to the Jewish minchah, which in itself had no intrinsic purity or cleanness. I need not repeat what I said in my first Number in answer to Protestants, who suppose that by this oblation are intended merely what they call "spiritual sacrifices," the prayers, praises, alms-deeds, and other good works of Christians; but I may add, that they who think that such good works, so far from being "pure," are as "filthy rags," cannot imagine that good works are the "pure offering" of which the prophet speaks, for in such case God would but choose one polluted offering in place of another. Certainly the prophet must mean what he says; and he declares that the oblation shall be pleasing to God because it is a clean oblation, not that it is a clean oblation because it is pleasing to God.

And now what other can this oblation be but His own "beloved Son, in whom He is well pleased;" "the Lamb without spot, who taketh away the sins of the world;" who "when He came into the world said, Sacrifice and oblation Thou wouldest not, but a body

Thou hast fitted to Me" (Heb. x. 5); that Body which, offered once upon the cross, He now continually offers by the hands of His priests on the altars of the Church, externally indeed but minchah, an offering of fine flour, but really and substantially that sacred Flesh which He took in the womb of the blessed Virgin of her pure substance, and which He promised to "give for the life of the world" (John vi. 52).

In connection with this prophecy of Malachi, consider the words of our divine Lord to the Samaritan woman, and observe how the passages mutually illustrate each other. The woman, acknowledging Jesus as a prophet, desires to have her mind set at rest on the long-disputed question which divided the Jews and her own people. "Our fathers," she says, "adored" (or "worshipped") in this mountain (Mount Garizim in Samaria), and you say that at Jerusalem is the place where men must adore" (John iv. 20). Now by worshipping, or adoring, is meant the offering of sacrifice, for thus the word is used elsewhere in Holy Scripture (Gen. xxii. 5; John xii. 20; Acts viii. 27), sacrifice being emphatically the worship of God; and indeed, all men were at liberty to worship

God, in the general sense of the word, wherever they pleased ; but sacrifice could be offered only in the place which God had chosen. "Jesus saith to her : Woman, believe Me, that the hour cometh when you shall neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem adore the Father" (ver. 21); that is to say, the hour cometh, and is close at hand, when the sacrifices, as well of Jews as of Samaritans, shall be abolished, and the "adoration" of the Father shall not be confined to this place or that, this mountain or that at Jerusalem, but shall be offered in every place. To which He adds, following up His own words, "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true adorers shall adore the Father in spirit and in truth." This is part of the prediction ; it tells of something not yet come : but "true adorers" had always "adored the Father in spirit and in truth," as the words are commonly understood ; good Jews and good Samaritans had prayed to Him and served Him sincerely, fervently, and truly. There would, therefore, have been nothing new in this ; something more must be intended. In her question the woman had meant, not worship in the general sense of the word, but worship by way of sacrifice ; and to

this our Lord replies, answering her question, but, as was His wont, far more than answering it. She had spoken of local rites and carnal sacrifices; He tells her of a worship which should be Catholic, embracing all true adorers of His Father; and of a sacrifice, of which those carnal sacrifices were but the figure. Doubtless His words were aimed at the heart of this poor inquirer, and were intended to open her eyes as to what true worship is, in the wider and more ordinary meaning of the word; and doubtless also Christian worship is more spiritual in its nature, for the Gospel dispensation is the perfection of the Jewish, and Christians have the very presence of Christ by the power of His Spirit dwelling in them: but the words of our Lord, while they include all this, denote a particular fulfilment; they point to the "clean oblation" of Malachi; that sacrifice which is not carnal but spiritual, not figurative but true; the sacrifice of Him "who by the Holy Ghost offered Himself unspotted to God" (Heb. ix. 14), and that union of our hearts therewith which makes His offering of Himself our offering also. This interpretation, while it satisfies the more general meaning of the words (compare verses 23, 24), gives them a deeper

import, and at the same time a peculiar application to the occasion on which they were spoken.

We now come to the institution of the Holy Eucharist itself. On the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month, every Jewish family, in obedience to the command of God, sacrificed a lamb, which was called the paschal lamb, in perpetual remembrance of their deliverance from Egypt by the hand of Moses. This lamb was a figure of Christ, "the Lamb of God." When, then, did He fulfil this figure? Doubtless on the Cross, when, as St. John says (xix. 36), not a bone of Him was broken, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled which said, "You shall not break a bone thereof" (Exod. xii. 46). But this was not the only or the most circumstantial fulfilment; for observe how exactly and in every particular the paschal lamb finds its accomplishment in the Holy Eucharist. 1. It was sacrificed and eaten, as I have said, on the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month; and at that very time—that is, on the evening of Maundy-Thursday—our Lord instituted the Holy Eucharist. He first, in obedience to the law, sacrificed and ate of the paschal lamb together with His disciples, and

then He celebrated that heavenly mystery, of which the paschal lamb was but the figure.

2. The paschal lamb was commemorative of the deliverance from the slavery of Egypt; and the Holy Eucharist is commemorative of our deliverance from the power of sin and Satan.

3. The paschal lamb was not only sacrificed, but eaten, and that as by travellers setting out on a journey; so also the Holy Eucharist is the refreshment of our souls in our pilgrimage through this world and our passage to our true country. St. Paul says (1 Cor. v. 7, 8), "Christ our Pasch is sacrificed; therefore let us feast," &c.; that is, He is sacrificed in such a manner as to be our sacramental feast.

4. The paschal lamb could be eaten only by Jews who were clean in the eye of the law; and so, again, the Holy Eucharist can be partaken of only by the members of the Church who are in a state of grace. None of these particulars apply immediately to the sacrifice of the Cross. Our Lord was crucified, not on the evening of the fourteenth day, but at noon on the day following. His crucifixion was not commemorative of our deliverance, but was itself the act by which our deliverance was wrought. He did not so sacrifice Himself on the cross as to give

His Body for meat and His Blood for drink. He suffered, not in Jerusalem, which is a figure of the Christian Church, but "without the gate" (Heb. xiii. 12); and not only the members of the Church, but aliens and strangers—not only the holy and clean, but the worst of sinners—may draw near to Him and feed on Him in their hearts by faith, that they may be converted and live. Doubtless, as I have said, the paschal lamb was a figure also of the sacrifice of the Cross; for if it was a figure of the Holy Eucharist, which represents the sacrifice of the Cross, it must needs be also a figure of the sacrifice which the Holy Eucharist represents. But indeed it was a figure of both; for it prefigured the sacrifice of Christ offered in a bloody manner on the Cross, and in an unbloody manner on the altar.

There is another legal ceremony which was expressly fulfilled at this time. When Moses had written the law according to the dictation of God, he ordered sacrifices to be offered; and after reading the words of the covenant in the hearing of the people, he took the blood and sprinkled them with it, and said, "This is the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you" (Exod. xxiv. 5-8; compare

Heb. ix. 19, 20). All this our Lord evidently fulfilled in the institution of the Holy Eucharist. When He took the chalice or cup, He said, "This is my Blood of the New Testament" (Matt. xxvi. 28), pronouncing the words of Moses with a new and deeper meaning, and giving His disciples the reality which those words foreshadowed. Now the blood which Moses took was the blood of a victim already sacrificed; therefore, also, the Blood which our Lord took was the Blood of one already sacrificed; that is to say, in the Holy Eucharist our Blessed Lord offered Himself in sacrifice before He gave His Blood to His disciples, saying, "Drink ye all of this." He sealed the new law and all its promises with His Blood, and confirmed it by His death upon the Cross.

Lastly, consider the words of institution. Our Lord says (Luke xxii. 19, 20), "This is My Body which is given for you;" or, as St. Paul has it, "which is broken for you" (1 Cor. xi. 24, Prot. version): "This is the chalice, the New Testament in My Blood, which shall be shed for you" (*is shed for you*, Prot. version); and, as it is in St. Matthew (xxvi. 28), "for many unto remission of sins." The shedding of the Blood, and the giving and breaking of

the Body, are a present thing; it takes place while the words are spoken. Again: the use of the term "broken" shows that it is the Eucharistic bread, or the Body of Christ under the appearance of bread, which is spoken of by St. Paul; for on the cross it was not broken, and as bread only can it be broken; and, indeed, in the previous chapter (1 Cor. x. 16) he had said, "The bread which we *break*, is it not the partaking of the Body of the Lord?" And observe further, the Body of Christ is said to be "broken" and "given *for* you;" that is, it is offered, not only to be eaten by you, but in sacrifice to God for you. Again, as the words in the original show, that which is "shed," or poured out, is not the "Blood," but the "chalice" or "cup;" that is, it is His Blood as shed, or poured, from the cup or chalice, of which our Lord here speaks, and not as shed on the Cross. And this chalice of Blood, again, is said to be not only "shed," but "shed *for* you:" it is offered to God in sacrifice for you, and not for you only, but for "many," for men in general, "unto remission of sins." It matters not whether the words are "*is* shed" or "*shall be* shed," nor whether it is the cup or the Blood to which they refer; for the meaning is the

SCRIPTURE PROOFS.

same, viz., that the Blood thus offered under the appearance of wine, in representation of the sacrifice of the Cross, should continue to be shed or poured from the Eucharistic chalice in the holy sacrifice of the altar.

Nor let any one object that, after all, Christ did not say, when He instituted the Holy Eucharist, that He was offering sacrifice; for neither did He say that He was offering sacrifice when He hung upon the Cross; nay, He did not say that He was redeeming the world; yet Protestants believe that thus it was. The act was a sacrificial act, and the words which our Lord used show that it was so. And so again, it may be quite true that our Lord is not recorded to have said in so many words to His Apostles that they should offer sacrifice; but if what He did himself was a sacrificial act, then when He told them to do as they had seen Him do, He did in effect tell them to offer the same sacrifice that He had offered. And this our Lord in fact did: He said to them, "Do this," and He added, "for a commemoration of Me" (Luke xxii. 19). He did not say, "Eat this," or "Drink this," but "*Do this*;" that is, perform the same act which you have seen Me perform, "for a commemoration of Me." These words also per-

fectly express the Catholic doctrine. The sacrifice of the Mass is a *commemorative* sacrifice; the sacrifices of the law represented the sacrifice of the Cross as future; the sacrifice of the Mass represents it as past. And as the sacrifices of the law were real sacrifices, though representative of a sacrifice still to come, so the sacrifice of the Mass is a real sacrifice, though commemorative of a sacrifice that is past.

What our Lord bade his Apostles do, we in reality find them doing in the Book of their Acts. We read of their "continuing in the communication of the breaking of bread" (ii. 42), and of their "breaking bread from house to house" (ver. 46), for as yet they could have no public churches of their own. Again; when it is said (xiii. 2) that "certain prophets and doctors were *ministering* to the Lord," the word used in the original properly denotes the offering of sacrifice in the solemn ministrations of the Church. Of course, Protestants may put a different and a lower meaning on these words; that is, they may put *their own* construction on them, instead of receiving them in the sense in which the Catholic Church has ever understood them. All I am concerned to show you is, that the Catholic doctrine, instead of being opposed

to Holy Scripture, as Protestants are in the habit of saying, is in perfect harmony therewith; that it comes up to and satisfies the full meaning of the words which the inspired writers used, in a way that no Protestant interpretation does.

There is another passage to which I have before alluded, and to which I would again direct your attention. St. Paul (1 Cor. x. 14, &c.), warning the Christians of Corinth against idolatry, institutes a comparison between the "table of the Lord" and the "altar" of the Jews and of the Gentiles or Heathens; and by this comparison he shows that the table of the Lord was also an altar on which sacrifice was offered. For, observe: the Jews offered sacrifices to God; and to "eat of the sacrifices," says the Apostle, was to be "partakers of the altar:" it was to hold communion with God, and to offer Him supreme worship. The heathens offered sacrifices to devils; and to eat of those sacrifices was to "be made partakers with devils," to hold communion with devils, to offer supreme worship to devils. But Christians, he says, are "partakers of the table of the Lord;" by the "chalice of benediction," they communicate in the Blood of Christ; and by

"the bread which we break," they become partakers of the Body of Christ. His argument, therefore, requires that this bread is bread offered in sacrifice, and this chalice a chalice offered in sacrifice; in other words, that the "table of the Lord" is also an altar of sacrifice. And see what force is thus given to the remonstrance that follows: "You cannot drink the chalice of the Lord, and the chalice of devils; you cannot be partakers of the table of the Lord, and of the table of devils" (ver. 21). Christians cannot be partakers with devils and worshippers of devils; they cannot communicate with devils by eating of sacrifices offered to devils; for they are partakers of the table, or altar, of the Lord, by partaking of the sacrifice offered thereon, even the Body of the Lord in the Eucharistic Bread, and the Blood of the Lord in the Eucharistic chalice.

Thus the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist fulfils every word of Holy Scripture, and gives a meaning to terms which every other interpretation but slightly touches or entirely overlooks. But remember, it would not matter, so far as Catholic principles are concerned, if the doctrine in question were never so much as distantly alluded to in Scripture; for Scrip-

ture to a Catholic is not what the Protestant professes to regard it or imagines it to be. The Protestant, as I said at the beginning, holds the Bible alone to be his teacher, and maintains that all he need believe is expressly written therein, and may be conclusively proved thereby; both which assertions the Catholic denies. To require a Catholic, therefore, to quote chapter and verse for the doctrine of the Mass, as if that nature of proof were necessary for his position, is to try to get him to establish the Catholic faith on Protestant grounds. The New Testament was not intended to teach us as for the first time what Christ did and said. All this had been taught, and, what is more, observed, by the Church, long before any one of the Gospels was written, and several hundred years before the New Testament was collected in the form in which we now have it. From the first the Church was the teacher of Christ's doctrine; and all I wish to show you is, that what the Church always taught and still teaches, is in strict accordance with Holy Scripture, and wonderfully opens out and illustrates its meaning.

Two remarks may fitly here be made: 1. The Protestant catches up the words of Holy

Scripture, and “plays upon” them, as the phrase is, without reference to sense or context. The Catholic reverently weighs them in the balance of the sanctuary, and interprets them according to the analogy of faith and the concordant teaching of the Church. On the other hand (2), the Protestant is not content with any single plain statement of God’s Word, but sets about gathering texts and accumulating Scripture proofs, and proportions his belief to the number of times in which, as he conceives, a doctrine is mentioned. To the Catholic, one word of Holy Writ, one intimation of the Divine Will, is enough. God says it, and he hearkens and obeys.

If you will think over the nature of the testimony that has been brought together from Scripture, in this and the two foregoing Tracts, in support of the doctrine of the Mass, and will contrast with it the way in which such testimony is commonly met by Protestants, you will find the truth of these remarks strikingly exemplified.



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